National Library
of Canada

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Service des thèses canadiennes

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

NOTICE

The quality of this microform is heavily dependent upon the quality of the original thesis submitted for microfilming. Every effort has been made to ensure the highest quality of reproduction possible.

If pages are missing, contact the university which granted the degree.

Some pages may have indistinct print especially if the original pages were typed with a poor typewriter ribbon or if the university sent us an inferior photocopy.

Reproduction in full or in part of this microform is governed by the Canadian Copyright Act, R.S.C. 1970, c. C-30, and subsequent amendments.

AVIS

La qualité de cette microforme dépend grandement de la qualité de la thèse soumise au microfilmage. Nous avons tout fait pour assurer une qualité supérieure de reproduction.

S'il manque des pages, veuillez communiquer avec l'université qui a conféré le grade.

La qualité d'impression de certaines pages peut laisser à désirer, surtout si les pages originales ont été dactylographiées à l'aide d'un ruban usé ou si l'université nous a fait parvenir une photocopie de qualité inférieure.

La reproduction, même partielle, de cette microforme est soumise à la Loi canadienne sur le droit d'auteur, SRC 1970, c. C-30, et ses amendements subséquents.

NL-339 (r. 88/04) c

Canada

National Library
of Canada

Canadian Theses Service

Ottawa, Canada
K1A 0N4

Bibliothèque nationale
du Canada

Service des thèses canadiennes

The author has granted an irrevocable non-exclusive licence allowing the National Library of Canada to reproduce, loan, distribute or sell copies of his/her thesis by any means and in any form or format, making this thesis available to interested persons.

The author retains ownership of the copyright in his/her thesis. Neither the thesis nor substantial extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without his/her permission.

L'auteur a accordé une licence irrévocable et non exclusive permettant à la Bibliothèque nationale du Canada de reproduire, prêter, distribuer ou vendre des copies de sa thèse de quelque manière et sous quelque forme que ce soit pour mettre des exemplaires de cette thèse à la disposition des personnes intéressées.

L'auteur conserve la propriété du droit d'auteur qui protège sa thèse. Ni la thèse ni des extraits substantiels de celle-ci ne doivent être imprimés ou autrement reproduits sans son autorisation.

ISBN 0-315-55438-X

Canadä

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

ADULTS' ANTICIPATION OF THE LOSS OF THEIR PARENTS

BY

MICHAEL DAVID FITZGERALD ©

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
IN
COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

EDMONTON, ALBERTA
FALL, 1989

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

RELEASE FORM

NAME OF AUTHOR: Michael D. Fitzgerald

TITLE OF THESIS: Adults' Anticipation of the Loss of Their Parents

DEGREE: Doctor of Philosophy

YEAR THIS DEGREE GRANTED: Fall, 1989

Permission is hereby granted to THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY to reproduce single copies of this thesis and to lend or sell such copies for private, scholarly or scientific purposes only.

The author reserves other publication rights, and neither the thesis or extensive extracts from it may be printed or otherwise reproduced without the author's written permission.

Michael D. Fitzgerald
(Student's signature)

11615 Edinboro Rd., Edmonton, Alta.
(Student's permanent address)

Date: [illegible]

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled ADULTS' ANTICIPATION OF THE LOSS OF THEIR PARENTS submitted by Michael D. Fitzgerald in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Counselling Psychology.

Paul C Sartoris
(Supervisor)

Dianne K Kieren

D. D. Sawatzky

(External Examiner)

Date: June 22, 1989

Dedicated to my parents

Ruth Fitzgerald

and

John Fitzgerald

(1920 - 1977)

ABSTRACT

Research in loss and bereavement during adult life has tended to focus on areas of mortality, death anxiety, loss of a child, and loss of a spouse. Recent study, however, has identified parental loss as having meaning and consequence for adult children both before and following the deaths of their parents. These studies provide valuable descriptive material which outlines assorted themes and issues facing adult children in approaching and dealing with their parents' deaths. The research, however, is limited by the lack of a theoretic framework serving to account for and explain processes undertaken by the adult children to resolve problematic issues either in the prospect or actual loss of their parents.

The present study employed qualitative methods involved in grounded theory research to discover and explain the experiences of adult children who anticipate the loss of their parents. Such study was deemed to have both preparatory and preventative value to the adult children in resolving issues related to the future loss of their parents. A sample of six adults volunteered to participate and data was collected through unstructured interviews. Data analysis was conducted utilizing the constant comparative method associated with grounded theory.

Adults who anticipate the loss of their parents were seen to engage in three main processes: discerning life and death, evaluating relationships with parents, and preparing to outlive, as they endeavoured to "reconcile" themselves to inevitable loss. Component processes, involving goals and strategies employed to reach those goals by the informants in the study, are outlined and presented in a model.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my great appreciation to the members of my supervisory committee, Dr. Paul Sartoris, Dr. Jan Morse, Dr. Dianne Kieren, and Dr. Don Sawatzky for their generous sharing of time, critical comment and consistent encouragement during all stages of this research project. My appreciation extends both to their scholarship and to the warm personal attention they gave to our discussions and interactions. I am grateful also to my external examiner, Dr. Don Knowles, for his interest and involvement in this research.

To the participants in the study, without whom this work would not have materialized, I would like, again, to convey my thanks for their candidness, availability, and the privilege of sharing their experiences related to this most personal of topics.

Thank you to my typist, Otti, for her cheerfulness and fancy fingerwork. Finally, to my family who bent, shuffled over, held their breath, rolled their eyes, and otherwise demonstrated character and bravery beyond measure as I careened through this project - I return!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER PAGE

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM 1
   - Models of Grief 4
   - Research Questions 6
   - Assumptions of the Research 6
   - Definitions 7
   - Delimitations of the Research 9
   - Conclusion 10

2. METHODOLOGY 12
   - Grounded Theory Methodology 13
   - Theoretical Context 18
   - Data Analysis 19
   - Reliability and Validity 22
   - Data Collection Methods
     - The Sample 26
   - Data Collection and Recording 28
   - Data Analysis 31
   - Ethical Considerations 34

3. RESULTS 36
   - Triggers 39

Discerning Life and Death
Definition 41
Questioning Life and Death 42
Anticipating Future Change 45
Evaluating Relationship with Parents 53
Definition 53
Evaluating Present/Past Relationship 54
Determining Desired Relationship 59
Assessing Future Challenges to Relationship . . . 60
Preparing to Outlive 65
Definition 66
Assessing Personal Resilience 66
Securing the Future 69
Reconciling Self to Inevitable Loss:
The Basic Social Psychological Process . . . 73
Negative Case 77

4. REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE 79
Death and Bereavement Literature 80
Parent-Child Relationship Literature 95
Adult Development and Aging Literature 100
MAJOR DATA FINDINGS IN CONTEXT OF THE
LITERATURE 111
Triggers & Reconciliation 111

5. CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION 122

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS 122

A Model: Reconciling Self to Inevitable Loss . . 129

Hypotheses 129

Strengths and Limitations of the Research 132

Implications for Education and Practice 136

REFERENCES 141

APPENDICES 154

Rando's Outline of the Multidimensional Nature and Component Processes of Anticipatory Grief . 155

Components of Grief 156

Informed Consent Form 157

LIST OF FIGURES

PAGE

Figure 1 Grounded Theory Process 20

Figure 2 Process of Reconciling Self to Inevitable Loss 37

Figure 3 Hypothesized Relationship Between Major Factors Involved in BSPP 133

CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Research in the areas of death and bereavement, parent-child relationships, and adult development are now well-established, yet studies dealing with grief and loss in adult life have traditionally focused upon topics of mortality, conjugal loss, loss of a child, and death anxiety (Bugen, 1979; Parkes, 1972; Raphael, 1983). Where a child's loss of a parent has received considerable attention (Furman, 1974; Le Shan, 1988), only recently has research developed to account for experiences of adult children who suffer the loss of their parents (Donnelly, 1987; Moss & Moss, 1983; Myers, 1987). Such literature highlights the importance of the parent-child relationship throughout the life-span, acknowledging its continuing effect upon adults and noting the particular impact of parental loss upon the adult children involved. The aforementioned writers, and others (Anderson, 1980; Malinak, Hoyt & Patterson, 1979), propose that the loss of a parent, for many adults, may be problematic. Adults may feel inappropriate in their own grief responses, or inhibited in expressing their thoughts and feelings to others, because of certain social and familial taboos against the discussion of matters related to death and dying. Additionally, commonly held attitudes that adults should be emotionally resilient to such losses, and that parental loss is simply a natural and expected passing of generations (Myers, 1987), may contribute to adults feeling restricted in their attempts to adjust to, or "come to terms" with, the deaths of their parents.

Kowalski (1986) suggests that an assortment of feelings, in addition to those just noted, could arise for adults before the deaths of their aged parents. Kowalski comments that adults may possess anxieties or fears related to being "orphaned", losing all possibility of resolving "unfinished business" with parents, and having to face the terms of their own mortality, in the foreseen deaths of their parents. Similar to those experienced following the actual loss of parents, adult children may encounter feelings of inhibition and isolation as they anticipate the expected deaths of their parents. Kowalski's work, however, remains on a descriptive level. Although it provides valuable themes and concepts to guide interest in the area, it is not theoretically based and does not attempt to identify specific processes engaged in by adults who anticipate the loss of their parents.

In this regard, Rando (1986) extensively outlines discernible processes, with components, related to anticipatory loss (see Appendix A). Describing these processes as interrelated and overlapping, Rando's work offers the clearest depiction to date of elements and factors involved in this area. Rando's model, however, could benefit from more specific delineation of movement between defined processes and, given its focus on general anticipatory loss, further verification across differing samples of individuals and groups.

In light of the work of Kowalski (1986), Rando (1986) and such writers as Moss & Moss (1983) and Anderson (1980), the present study looks to discover the nature of the process that is engaged in by adults who anticipate the eventual loss of their parents.

Significance and Aim. The significance of this study is related to its method of research, grounded theory, which endeavors to establish a theoretical framework, from data, in order to explain and increase understanding of a phenomenon or process of human experience. Such generated theory would have general relevance to all persons anticipating the eventual loss of their parents, and direct use for helping professionals looking to assist others in a preparatory or preventative capacity. The aim of the study, then, is to develop a theoretical model or framework which explains the process which adults engage in as they anticipate the loss of their parents.

Models of Grief

Early work by Lindemann (1944) proposed that grief symptoms were evident in subjects engaged in anticipation of loss. While Lindemann's work outlined characteristics of such anticipatory grieving, it did not include a model of the grieving process. Subsequently, a number of researchers have offered models of this kind defining various stages and phases of the grieving process. Although these descriptions represent efforts to provide a generally ordered framework for the grief process, they do so with recognition that grief occurs in a highly individualistic manner which often does not follow a sequential pattern of response. Gore (1965) identifies three stages of grief: shock, withdrawal, and re-establishing physical and mental balance, assigning approximate durations and examples of activities and tasks in each. Kavanaugh (1972) outlines seven stages involved in mourning, commencing also with shock and proceeding to stages of disorganization, volatile emotions, guilt, loss and loneliness, relief and finally, re-establishment. Bowlby (1961, 1980) describes four stages: numbing, yearning and searching (to recover the lost object), disorganization and despair, and reorganization, while Parkes (1970, 1972) postulates a similar number and terminology in describing stages of bereavement: numbness, pining and search, depression and recovery. Finally, Kubler-Ross (1969), in perhaps the most widely referenced contemporary model of grieving, provides for five stages during bereavement: denial and isolation, anger, bargaining, depression, and acceptance.

In the only major model endeavoring to operationalize the processes and factors associated with anticipatory grieving, Rando (1986) outlines three time foci, two perspectives, three classes of variables, and three interrelated processes with numerous components in her description of the grieving process. With its detail and expansiveness, Rando's work constitutes a significant contribution to the literature and research on anticipatory loss and grief (see: Chapter Four, Literature Review, and Chapter Five, Conclusion and Discussion).

Citing that weaknesses exist, however, in stage depictions of bereavement, Bugen (1978) cautions: "(a) The stages are not separate entities. (b) They are not necessarily successive. (c) Certain stages are not necessarily experienced. (d) Certain stages will vary in duration and intensity from person to person. (e) Little empirical evidence exists that substantiates the notion of stages" (p.2). Despite such valid criticism, the preceding descriptions stand as valuable attempts to organize and depict aspects of the grieving process. With their general movement toward stages or conditions of recovery from, and acceptance of loss, these models represent optimistic views of the bereavement process while allowing for individual differences in the order, rate, duration and "success" with which they are undertaken.

Research Questions

The present research was undertaken to discover the process by which adults anticipate the loss of their parents and, more specifically, how they attempt to resolve for themselves the prospect of future loss. The identification of both the research problem and its aim leads to general questions within the study:

1. How do adults view the prospective loss of their parents?
2. What actions do adults undertake in light of the anticipated loss of their parents?
3. How are these thoughts and actions integrated into a process by which adults anticipate the loss of their parents?

Assumptions of the Research

The present research holds several assumptions related to the study of thanatology, and matters related to human development and interaction:

1. A healthy outlook on life necessarily comprehends death.
2. Death and dying are not and should not be taboo subjects.
3. Education in thanatology is necessary.
4. Humans form attachments to which they assign significance and worth.
5. The bond between parents and children is one of, if not the, strongest intergenerational attachments which exists.
6. Human development consists of ordered yet non-exclusive, overlapping stages and phases of growth and maturation. These stages occur in various emotional, cognitive, behaviorial, somatic, intrapsychic and interpersonal contexts, and possess the elements of general, discernible points of transition or change between them.
7. Individuals develop and are able to express, in their individual manner, personal and unique views of the world as it is perceived and lived in by them.

Note: Assumptions 1 - 3 are taken from Kutscher, Carr & Kutscher, 1987, pp. 1-2.

Definitions

Adult. Although achieving a generally usable definition of adult or adulthood remains problematic (Rogers, 1982), for purposes of this research, adult refers to an individual having obtained the chronological age of 20 years and extends upwards to the end of the lifespan.

Parents. Adult children in the study regarded parents as being those individuals who, by merit of having biologically produced or legally adopted them, served as primary caregivers during their upbringings or portions thereof.

Family. Family refers to the central and extended relationships of individuals consisting of parents, children, siblings, grandparents, aunts, uncles and various assorted derivations.

Thanatology. The term thanatology denotes in this research the study of matters related to death and dying.

Developmental Change. For present purposes, developmental change refers to expected or planned events or transitions which occur intrapsychically or socially to self or others. Such developmental changes include aging, forming intimate relationships and choosing life endeavors or pursuits.

Crises. In the context of this study, crises refer to unexpected events or transitions which occasion upset or trauma. Examples of crises include sudden loss or near-loss precipitated by separation, accident or serious illness. Crises are, at times termed life-crises in this discussion. While developmental changes are recognized in this research to potentially contain "crisis" aspects, for purpose of clarity the two terms are defined separately.

Grief. Refers to the emotional, cognitive and/or behavioral experience or expression of regret/remorse related to loss. "Grief" is here used interchangeably with the term mourning and bereavement.

Delimitations of the Research

Although much demographic diversity was achieved in the study through sampling of primary and secondary informants (see: Chapter Two, Methodology), adults who formed the primary sample of the research were all university educated, middle-class caucasians. These adults presented much variance individually in their perceptions of matters related to life and death, their relationships with their parents, and the nature of their own development. Generalizability of findings to the larger population, while not an issue for qualitative research (see also: Chapter Two, Methodology), would require more extensive sampling procedures.

The present study was also primarily comprised of adults who no longer lived at home or shared living arrangements with their parents, a factor which may provide interesting information for a subject of the kind this research addresses (see: Chapter Five, Conclusions and Discussions).

Additionally, while those who volunteered for the present research did so willingly and with enthusiasm, one individual who was approached declined involvement in the study. No specifics of why this individual was disinterested in the research were ascertained by the researcher and refusal may be attributed to general reasons associated with the unpreparedness of certain numbers to become involved in any form of research (Sanders & Pinhey, 1983). Reasons for not participating in this particular research, however, may exist for this individual or others and may be be worth discovering.

Conclusion

While research in the areas of death and dying, parent-child relationships, and adult development has been marked by varied and abundant study, little attention has been given to the experiences of adult children who suffer the deaths of their parents. Recent studies (Moss & Moss, 1983; Myers, 1987) have provided concepts and themes accounting for the responses of adults to parental loss, and have applied that descriptive material to the period before loss where adults may engage in anticipating the deaths of their parents (Kowalski, 1986). In either event, whether anticipated or experienced, these studies suggest the loss of parents to be both meaningful and potentially problematic for adults as they endeavor to understand and adjust to the loss. Although a description of processes involved in the area of anticipatory loss exists (Rando, 1986), it remains general in focus and lacks clear delineation of movement or change between component parts. The present research looks to address these aspects by developing a theoretical model or framework which identifies and explains the process by which adults anticipate the loss of their parents.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGY

As Field and Morse (1985) state, the research approach for any particular area of inquiry "should be selectively and appropriately used according to the nature of the problem and what is known about the phenomena to be studied" (p.12). In the description of the present research problem, outlined in Chapter One, Statement of the Problem, the research interest was identified as being the experiences of adults anticipating the loss of their parents, the nature of the adults' perceptions regarding that experience, and processes involved for the adults as they endeavor to adjust or "come to terms" with anticipating the loss of their parents. As the present research involves interest in the "emic" perspective, or the view of the research participant, and has as one of its purposes a description of "...a particular phenomenon or event about which little is known" (Field & Morse, 1985, p.11), a qualitative approach was selected as the most appropriate method of study. Grounded theory methodology was further selected as most suitable among the various qualitative methods, since the present research held as one of its purposes the identification and explanation of those processes undertaken by the adults concerned as they endeavored to resolve problematic areas of their experience anticipating the loss of their parents. With its focus upon "...discover(ing) and conceptualiz(ing) complex interactional processes" (Hutchinson, 1986, p.112), grounded theory aims at "...the systematic generating of theory from data, that itself is systematically obtained from social research" (Glaser, 1978, p.2).

In this chapter, the method and intention of grounded theory will be discussed, followed by a brief outline of principles associated with the concept of "symbolic interaction" as a theoretical context for grounded theory. Matters dealing with reliability, validity, and ethics will then be discussed, before a full accounting of the sample, data collection and analysis of data in the present study.

Grounded Theory Methodology

Developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967) in response to their observation that the theories of a few "favored" theorists were guiding the hypothetico-deductive research of the time (Turner, 1981), grounded theory aims to develop theory, founded in data, "that accounts for a pattern of behavior which is problematic for those involved" (Glaser, 1978, p.2). In outlining means by which researchers could develop their own theories from the "discovered" conditions, consequences and strategies of behavior contained in their collected data, Glaser and Strauss endeavored to assist these researchers with creating their own conceptual or theoretical frameworks from which to view social and psychological phenomena, as well as inform further research by themselves and others. Quoting directly from Glaser (1978), he proposes that the movement from "empirical, experiential and descriptive" knowledge, to knowledge which involves "ideationally organized" conceptualization and theory, offers the researcher a number of important benefits:

> 1. He is able to anticipate additional kinds of consequences, conditions and strategies of an act besides what he knows of empirically.
> 2. He can expand his description and meaning of incidents by placing them in greater scope as his thought transcends the details he knows so well.
> 3. Concepts are easier to remember than incidents, especially fewer concepts which are integrated in a theory in the place of a multitude of unintegrated incidents. Thus his capacity to know is potentiated.
> 4. As the knowledgeable man's theoretical view expands his social base can expand.

He can take on the diversity of larger units, or many units, which if he was limited to only knowing incidents, would overload his capacity. As he learns to transcend particular incidents and transfer concepts to other situations, he can consolidate his broadening power as it opens up possibilities and opportunities. He can organize and map the unknown faster with his ideational tools, which detail new incidents as merely interchangeable with those of familiar underlying uniformities.

5. Men in the know can easily become locked in or status quo oriented, as their knowledge becomes stable, consistent and consolidates their position. With theory their perceptions are more amenable to change since they can begin to see the processes making for change and can modify their ideas to handle the new knowledge. They begin to transcend what was seen as inviolate, by seeing previous happenings as merely elements of patterns in process. They can work with familiar occasions purposefully.

> 6. By seeing his knowledge in a theoretical view, he can begin to capitalize on it in ways heretofore out of his perception. Possibilities of all kinds open up. His judgement is sharpened, as he sees variable new strategies, conditions and consequences. (pp.13-14)

Grounded theory methods provide the means to discover and explain social and psychological processes engaged in by individuals attempting to resolve problematic areas in their lives. Glaser and Strauss' (1967) term for such processes is Basic Social Processes (BSP), of which they identify two types: a Basic Social Structural Process (BSSP), and a Basic Social Psychological Process (BSPP). While a Basic Social Structural Process refers to a "social structure in process - usually growth or deterioration - such as bureaucratization or debureaucratization, routinization, centralization or decentralization, organizational growth admitting or recruiting procedures, succession, and so forth" (Glaser, 1978, p.102), a Basic Social Psychological Process indicates a "social psychological process such as becoming, highlighting, personalizing, health optimizing, awe inspiring and so forth" (p.102). As the authors (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) outline in their original and later works (Bigus, Hadden & Glaser, 1982; Glaser, 1978; Strauss, 1987), a BSP serves to explain a pattern of behavior, or social process, which is relevant and problematic for those involved, as well as providing for its resolution. Involved in this process are two or more stages, allowing for change over time, which have discernible points of transition and account for variations in the pattern of behavior. Theory is generated from an analysis of collected data and identifies and explains those processes. One process, then, stands as "core", uniting the rest and depicting the dominant means by which individuals attempt to resolve the particular problem facing them.

Glaser and Strauss (1967) identify two forms of theory: substantive theory and formal theory. As Strauss (1987) explains, substantive theory is "developed for a substantive, or empirical area of inquiry, such as patient care, professional education, or industrial relations" while formal theory "is developed for a formal, or conceptual, area of inquiry such as stigma, formal organization, or socialization" (p.242). In either case, according to Glaser (1978), generated theory must satisfy four criteria: 1) the theory must have fit, in that the categories alter as emerging data shapes the developing theory, 2) the theory must possess relevance, 3) the theory must work through its ability to "explain what happened, predict what will happen and interpret what will happen in an area of substantive or formal inquiry" (p.4), and 4) the theory must be modifiable in order to avoid precluding new data or information. These general qualities of inclusion and integration are seen by Glaser as transcendent characteristics of grounded theory in that they lead to an incorporation of "previous descriptions and theories about an area" (p.7), thus promoting increased conceptualization at higher levels of abstraction of the subject under study.

Theoretical Context

Grounded theory draws fully from concepts of symbolic interaction which, as Chenitz and Swanson (1986) describe, focus upon the "inner or experiential aspects of human behavior" (p.4). Developed from work by Mead (1934), who outlined a process by which a sense of self arises, and Blumer (1969), who saw action or behavior as purposively based on the particular meaning an object, event, or situation had for people, symbolic interaction concerns itself with two main issues: first, how people define and attribute meaning to events in natural and everyday settings, and secondly, how people behave in accordance with their beliefs and view of reality (see Burr, Leigh, Day & Constantine, 1979 for an extensive listing of assumptions related to symbolic interaction). Implicit in the aforementioned research are notions that people create the symbolic meaning or reality of a situation, and that subsequent behaviour, with its consequences, can only be understood in context and as part of ongoing process.

Data Analysis

As Strauss (1987) points out, the grounded theory approach may not be so much a "method" or "technique" as a "style of doing qualitative analysis that includes a number of distinct features, such as theoretical sampling, and certain methodological guidelines, such as the making of constant comparisons and the use of a coding paradigm, to ensure conceptual development and density" (p.5). This intention by Glaser and Strauss, to allow grounded theory to be approached with a measure of latitude by researchers (Glaser, 1978, p.ix), has produced a number of writings on the subject (Charmaz, 1983; Corbin, 1986; Hutchinson, 1986; Pennington, 1988; Rennie, Phillips & Quartaro, 1988; Stern, 1980; Turner, 1981). Although terminology varies slightly among these authors, common features dealing with the analysis of data are evident and involve steps comparable to general qualitative research methods in which the collection of data is "modified as directed by the advancing theory" (Field & Morse, 1985, p.109). As such, the gathering of data and data analysis, through constant comparisons, occurs in concurrent fashion, leading to the eventual formation of theory (Figure 1). Collected data is initially organized

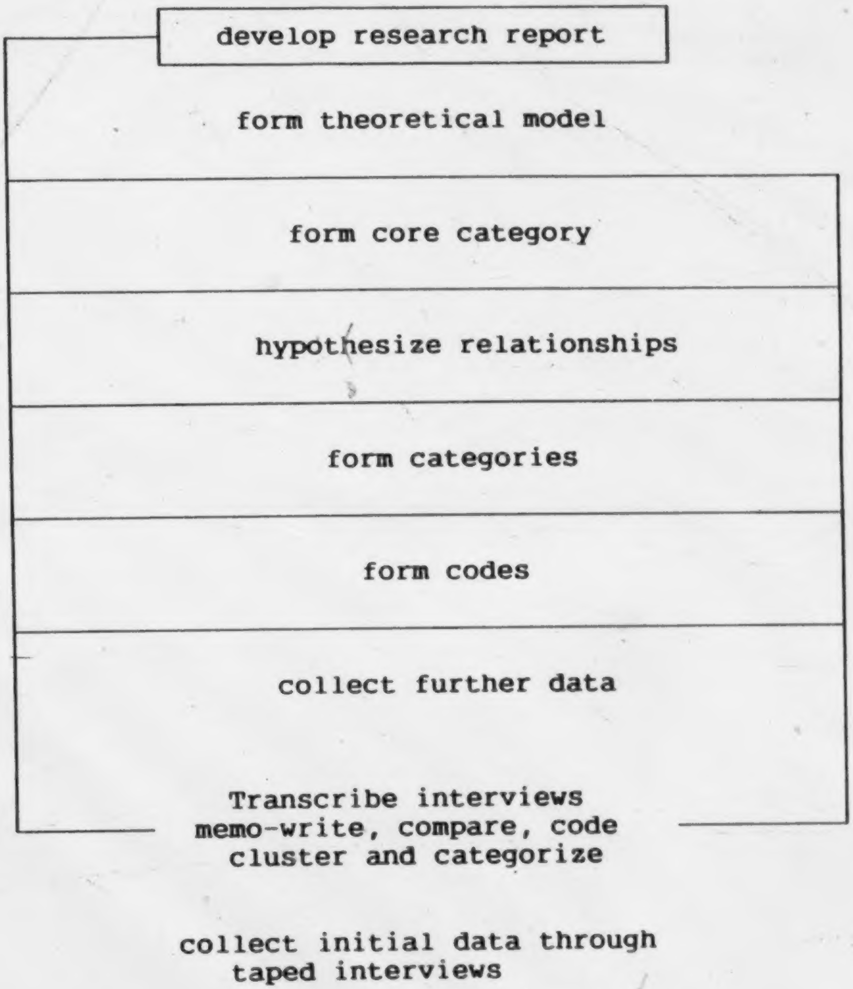
develop research report
form theoretical model
form core category
hypothesize relationships
form categories
form codes
collect further data
Transcribe interviews
memo-write, compare, code
cluster and categorize
collect initial data through
taped interviews

Fig. 1 Grounded Theory Process
(Material derived from various sources)

through "open coding" procedures which assign "substantive" or "in vivo" codes to the material. The use of such codes, which often contain the exact words of the informant, serve to prevent the use of preconceived codes or "impressions" the analyst may bring to, or have in, the research (Hutchinson, 1986), and thus preserve the validity of the work. Various subsequent levels of coding function to "cluster" and "categorize" the material both conceptually and theoretically, often in accordance with some, or all, of Glaser's (1978, pp.74-82_) "The Six C's": causes, context, contingencies, consequences, covariances, and conditions. Selective sampling of further informants, adds variation and eventually results in the saturation of new, or incoming, material as major categories and processes are being identified. Also referred to as purposive sampling (Patton, 1980), and maximum variation sampling (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), theoretical sampling (Glaser, 1978) involves active selection of subjects who, by merit of their special characteristics or knowledge, are unlikely to express similar concepts, and thus contribute to maximum variation within the research. This comparison of as many similarities and differences as possible serves to broaden and ensure the representativeness of the developing categories, and eventual theory. Further theoretical sampling of the literature as a source of data, use of secondary informants, and constant memo-writing assist in forming and confirming "discovered" categories and interrelated processes, including the core category and/or dominant Basic Social Process (BSP), which lead, in turn, to the development of hypotheses and theory.

Reliability and Validity

Scientific inquiry, whether undertaken employing qualitative or quantitative methods, must possess "adequacy" and "rigor" through demonstrations of reliability, validity, and objectivity, terms most closely associated with quantitative research. Lincoln and Guba (1985) cite the need in all research for criteria to establish the "truth value", "applicability", "consistency", and "neutrality" (p.290) of investigations, and offer companion terms for qualitative, or naturalistic, investigations: credibility (internal validity), transferability (external validity), dependability (reliability), and confirmability (objectivity).

Credibility. Field and Morse (1985) and Lincoln and Guba (1985), similar to Glaser (1978), identify the truth value or credibility of qualitative research as residing in its ability to discover and "fit" the reality of its subjects. In order to most accurately retain and portray the perceived and lived phenomena or experiences of those being studied, these authors, and others (Emerson, 1983; Hutchinson, 1986), propose a number of useful practices here summarized:

(a) use of low inference descriptions or verbatim transcripts of interviews.

(b) sharing findings with informants, as well as other researchers or readers, in order to check how "recognizable" the researched experiences are.

(c) eliciting as much "volunteered" information from participants as possible.

(d) partaking in "prolonged engagement" with the study, in which informants are seen on more than one occasion, and the collected materials, through constant comparisons, are checked and rechecked for "fit" in the study.

(e) examination of negative cases within the research.

As described by Sanders and Pinhey (1983), negative cases are "observed cases that do not conform to an established pattern" (p.372), which are not used to "see" or gain perspective on the dominant patterns in the research. Field and Morse (1985) go so far as to characterize negative cases as "those episodes which clearly refute an emergent theory or proposition" (p.106). In either event, negative cases stand as atypical to the predominant pattern in a study and their identification assists in both broadening and deepening the emerging theory by establishing instances where the theory would be unlikely to, or simply not, apply.

Transferability. Since participants are initially selected due to their ability to inform or enlighten the area of study, and further informants are selected on the basis of findings which emerge from the study, overall results from the research may be viewed as representing the typical and atypical aspects of the participants' experiences. The question, however, "can a theory generated in a specific context be generalized to a larger group?" (Hutchinson, 1986, p.116), is perhaps best directed to the nature and purpose of the particular theory developed. In seeking to identify and explain processes by which individuals attempt resolving problematic areas for themselves, substantive theory concerns itself with the particular individuals under study. The ability to generalize results may be extended by systematic comparisons of contrasting groups, although this is undertaken less often due the amount of work involved in such an effort (Rennie, Phillips & Quartaro, 1988). As Hutchinson (1986) states, however, development of "quality" theory will result in the discovery of a basic social process that is "relevant to people in general" (p.116). Although grounded theory research, and qualitative study in general, is often regarded as a stepping-stone or foundation to other research, and may, in fact serve that purpose, Morse (1989) contends that "a qualitative research project should be considered as a study complete in itself" (p.7). As such, development of substantive theory, as in the present study, does not have as its purpose generalizability of findings, although certain ability to generalize may result from the quality of theory generated.

Dependability. The matter of reliability or replicability of the research is also to be considered, although Hutchinson (1986) gives this particular feature fairly low priority: "The question of replicability is more especially relevant, since the point of theory generation is to offer a new perspective on a given situation and to offer a good and useful way of looking at a certain world" (p.117). Chenitz and Swanson (1986), in a similar vein, comment that "since grounded theory is derived from the researcher's skill, creativity, time, resources, and analytic ability, no two analyses will be exactly alike, since no two researchers are alike" (p.13). Lincoln and Guba (1985) suggest that auditability, whereby all materials and matters related to the development of the research and its findings may be accounted for, should act as the criterion for dependability. In this manner, although a different researcher would not achieve exact replication of study results, similar findings would be likely if comparable data and methods were employed.

Confirmability. Objectivity, or freedom from bias both in the conduct of research and in the research findings, is a further area of consideration. Since qualitative investigation both relies upon and seeks the subjective perspectives of the informants as well as the subjective views and creative abilities of the researcher, it may be criticized for not maintaining appropriate neutrality. In response to such concerns, Hutchinson (1986) points to the abundance of data available to the researcher - through direct observation, interviews, and document analysis - as a feature preventing "undue bias" (p.116). Strauss (1987) cites the value of checking both the research in progress and study findings with colleagues or outsiders, and the regular writing of memos, as methods of identifying and balancing researcher bias. Finally, Guba and Lincoln (1985) propose that confirmability, or neutrality in the research is achieved when truth value, auditability and applicability have been adequately addressed.

In all, a view common among proponents of qualitative research (Morse, 1989) holds that the advantages of gaining insight into the phenomena or reality of subjects, and utilizing the creative abilities of researchers, offer benefits which outweigh possible drawbacks or limitations inherent in the approach.

Data Collection Methods

The Sample

Grounded theory looks to obtain a "purposeful (or theoretical) sample" (Morse, 1989, p.110) in which informants are initially selected due to general knowledge they possess relevant to the research subject, and later selected due to their particular knowledge or atypical experience related to discovered patterns and emerging theory. Given the broad population group "adults" from which the present study sought information, and the particular research topic involved, only two criteria delimited the research sample: participants were to be 20 years of age or older, and to have either anticipated or be currently anticipating the loss of their parents.

Informants who met the aforementioned criteria, the latter ascertained by merit of information disclosed by the participants during conversation, were located directly by the researcher from friends or acquaintances in the general population, or referred by the same. Two informants were initially selected and separately interviewed allowing for comparison of data. On the basis of analysis of data further informants were selected with the purpose of theoretical sampling for optimum variation in the study, including atypical characteristics to the findings, and in order to saturate new or incoming information. Eventually, six principal informants served as the primary sample of the research, while data from numerous secondary informants served to verify or confirm the findings and developing theory. Described by Field and Morse (1985) as "...all other persons within the same setting, or people in similar situations in other settings" (p.59), secondary informants in the study were adults who expressed relatedness (or not) to themes, issues and processes established in the research. Secondary informants were both male and female, came from diverse educational backgrounds, represented some ethnic variation, and ranged in age from their early twenties to their early seventies.

Four females and two males were involved in the primary sample and ranged in age from 22 years to 40 years old. Each participant was caucasian and was either presently involved in or had completed a university level education. The fathers of two of the informants were deceased, while the parents of the remaining informants were alive and living together as couples. Three of the adult respondents were single, two married and one engaged to be married. Both of the married adults had children, the other adults did not. Four of the informants lived at some geographical distance from their parents, while the other two participants lived within the same population center as their parents. All the adults maintained regular contact with their parents. Lastly, each of the adults had siblings ranging in number from one to eleven; three of the adults were the youngest child in their family, two were middle children, and one adult was second eldest, with considerable difference between his age and that of the next youngest sibling.

Data Collection and Recording

Consistent with the purpose of grounded theory, to "discover" processes undertaken by individuals in order to resolve problematic areas in their lives, data was primarily gathered through unstructured, audio-taped interviews which encouraged and optimized participants' willingness to volunteer information about their experiences. Initial interviews commenced with general, informal conversation aimed at establishing a measure of support and trust with the informant and led to a more specific discussion of the context and purpose of the research. In the course of such discussion, any and all questions the informants had concerning the research were addressed and a letter giving informed consent to participation in the study was signed (see Ethical Considerations). The principal interviews each began with the gathering of background/demographic information from the participants, and proceeded by means of questions to general discussion of the research topic as it pertained to the informants' experiences. For example, interviews usually began with the invitation, "Tell me something about yourself, your background. . .". At some early point in the interview, informants were invited to further comment, if they had not done so already, upon their relationship with their parents. Since participants were acquainted, in general terms, with the topic of the research, they often narrowed their comments to the subject of considering or anticipating the loss of their parents. Overall, participants were found to be candid and generous in their remarks. As information was gathered in individual interviews and themes and patterns emerged through the analysis of data, questions became more specific in order to "check out" and develop certain aspects of the findings.

Interviews were approximately sixty minutes in length and took place in private, indoor settings (office or home) agreed to by the participant and researcher. During the course of approximately 6 months of interviewing, three adults were interviewed twice, one was interviewed three times, and two adults were interviewed once. Due to such factors as the taking of vacations, and logistics involved in arranging mutually convenient meeting times, a matter of weeks often existed in the time between first, second, or third interviews. Recorded interviews, however, were immediately transcribed and made available to the informants to read before subsequent interviewing, in order to check for accuracy of content and allow the participants an opportunity to further comment on any aspect of the previous discussion. Names and other information deemed to directly identify the informant were excluded from the otherwise verbatim transcriptions. It is acknowledged as a feature of the aformentioned interview format that collected data reflect in part the interactive process that is involved between informants and the researcher. Researcher participation, however, was purposively kept to a minimum in order to maximize gathering accounts which accurately represented the participants' experiences.

An additional practice of memo-writing was undertaken by the researcher concurrent with the ongoing collection of data from interviews. A means of "... preserving emerging hypotheses, analytical schemes, hunches, and abstractions" (Stern, 1980, p.23), the regular writing of memos allowed the researcher to note patterns and processes in the findings, record his own reactions to the research, and develop directions for further research within the study in the course of forming tentative hypotheses and theory.

Data Analysis

Collected data was analyzed according to methods common to major approaches to qualitative research (Field and Morse, 1985) and descriptions of grounded theory method found in the writings of numerous authors (Charmaz, 1983; Corbin, 1986; Emerson, 1983; Hutchinson, 1986; Pennington, 1983; Rennie, Phillips & Quartaro, 1988; Stern, 1980; Turner, 1981).

Analysis of data commenced with the researcher making verbatim written transcriptions and copies of transcriptions of each interview. During the transcribing of interviews, key words, phrases, ideas and processes contained in the data, or occurring to the researcher from a reading of the data, were recorded in the form of memos. Transcripts were next rewritten as a list of individual analytical units or meaningful statements based upon a line by line analysis of the interview. Each sentence of the transcript, then, was analyzed for key words, incidents and pieces of information that expressed the participants experience. In this manner, statements or bits of information that had no relevance to the research topic, were repetitious or redundant could be separated and discarded (Pennington, 1988). Each statement, in turn, was numerically coded to denote the participant, interview number and line of transcript from which it originated. Individual statements or series of statements were next analyzed by a first level of *in vivo* or substantive coding. Such coding which utilizes key words in the material, especially *gerunds*, acted to identify important attitudes, perceptions, feelings and processes contained in the participants experience, as well as the context in which they occurred. While retaining the substance of the original data, *in vivo* or substantive coding began to organize the material on a descriptive level. Statements or series of related statements were often assigned several codes, since many times more than one process, thought or feeling was evident in each. Assignments of more than one code in this manner allowed for maximum application of the material as it was constantly compared within itself to discover its patterns and conceptual properties (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Ongoing comparison of material through several versions of coding resulted in a reduced number of more highly conceptual codes which emphasized common elements of underlying patterns and relationships in the data. A portion of original data, then, as the statement,

> I feel so close to her (mother) that she's almost a part of myself and, if I were to lose her, it would be like losing a large part of myself

was initially assigned the codes feeling closeness to mother and losing part of self. These in vivo or substantive codes were later subsumed in the codes considering future change and feelings toward parents. The data thus coded, copies of the material were made to accommodate the maximum number of codes assigned to any one particular statement or series of statements. Each coded segment of material was then cut apart from the copied sheets and clustered with other segments according to its particular code. The clusters were then checked for the appropriateness and fit of the included statements, again looking for repetitions, redundancies or instances where the material no longer had relevance to emerging patterns and relationships in the data. Discovery of relationships, patterns and processes in the material through constant comparison resulted in the further grouping of material into broader conceptual categories. The categories in turn were grouped into a small number of basic social processes (BSP) which stood as the main processes, with components, employed by the informants to resolve the identified problem of "facing inevitable loss".

Core Variable/BSP. Early in the analysis of data, the core variable/BSP, "reconciling self to inevitable loss" was tentatively identified. Comments from informants outlining their dealing with loss or anticipated loss, as having to "come to terms with", "adjust to", "reconcile" and "live peacefully" with that experience resulted in the forming of "reconciling" as the dominant conceptual process engaged in by the adults as they anticipated the loss of their parents. Subsequent interviewing, analysis of data and theoretical sampling of the literature (see Literature Review), tested the degree to which the BSP, emerging hypotheses and theory contained elements of fit, relevance, work (ability), and modifiability as outlined in the criteria set forth by Glaser (1978) discussed earlier in this chapter. The feature of modifiability, indeed, continued an aspect of data analysis up to the point of writing the present report, in the form of final adjustments to a model depicting the BSP, "reconciling self to inevitable loss".

Ethical Considerations

Anonymity and confidentiality are primary considerations for participants in the study. Strict observance was applied to the use of pseudonyms and the removal of all identifying information which may have personally linked any individual to the investigation. Participants were informed beforehand of the nature of the study, how the data was to be stored, with whom the data would be discussed in terms of supervision of the research, and in what manner the data would be used and presented. Any and all questions participants had concerning the research project were answered to their satisfaction. A letter of informed consent (See Appendix C) was signed by each participant and individuals were assured of their right to refuse responding to any part of an interview, as well as their right to withdraw at any time from the investigation. Potential risks and benefits of the study were fully discussed with participants, with special attention paid to the sensitive nature of the research topic allowing for affects its discussion might have upon the participants. In this regard, the willingness of the researcher to provide relevant information concerning available support sources, if either asked for or deemed appropriate, was made known. All tapes and transcripts were kept in a secured location.

CHAPTER THREE

RESULTS

The primary purpose of this research, was to generate theory aimed at explaining the basic social psychological process (BSPP) engaged in by adults anticipating the loss of their parents. Two fundamental goals, discussed in Chapter Two, were pursued in the analysis of data. The first was to locate and identify conceptual features common to adults anticipating the loss of their parents. The second was to locate and identify the basic social psychological process (BSPP) employed in order to address and resolve the central problem challenging them, "facing inevitable loss".

With respect to the first goal, analysis of data, employing the constant comparative method, identified three major processes and component elements (See Figure 2) engaged in by participants during this problem-solving effort: discerning life/death, evaluating relationship with parents, and preparing to outlive.

As outlined in Figure 2, these processes, with their component elements, are proposed as ordered and sequential while allowing for overlapping, recursive or cyclical

PROCESS OF RECONCILING SELF

TO INEVITABLE LOSS

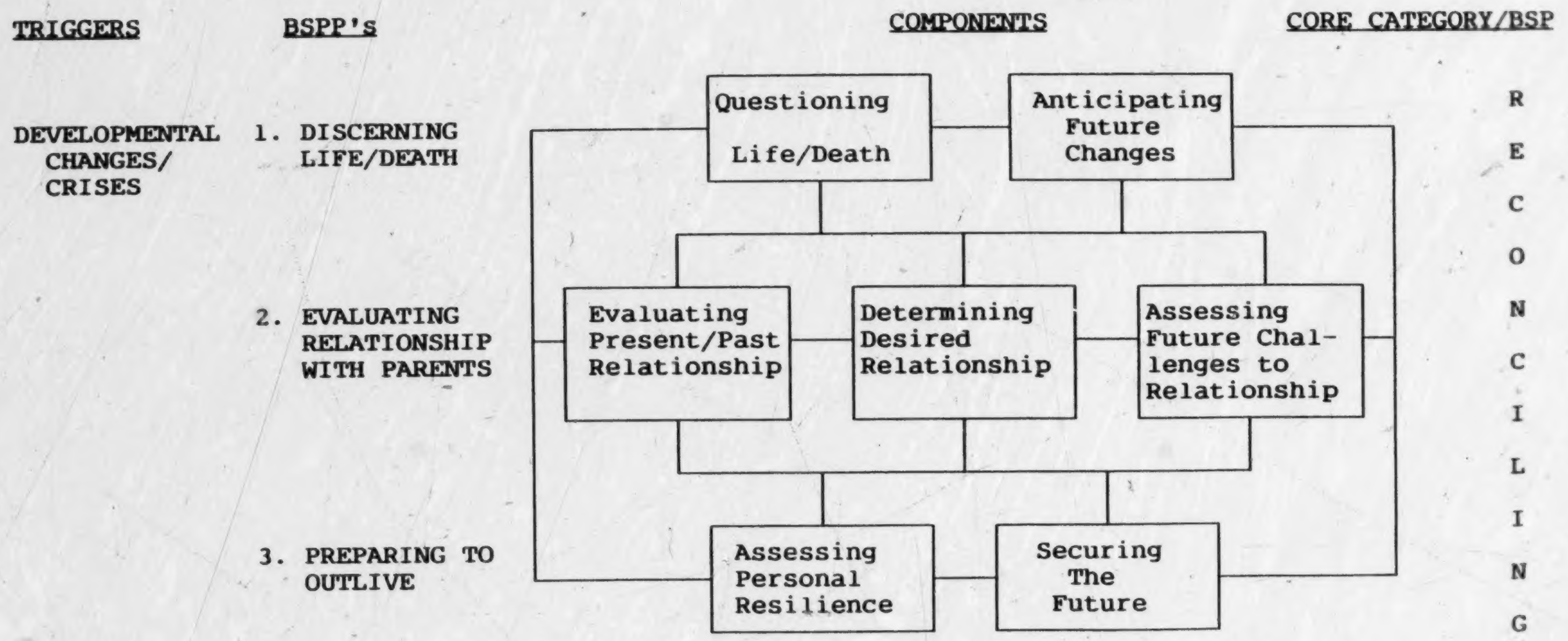
TRIGGERS
BSPP's
COMPONENTS
CORE CATEGORY/BSP
DEVELOPMENTAL CHANGES/ CRISES
1. DISCERNING LIFE/DEATH
2. EVALUATING RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS
3. PREPARING TO OUTLIVE
Questioning Life/Death
Anticipating Future Changes
Evaluating Present/Past Relationship
Determining Desired Relationship
Assessing Future Challenges to Relationship
Assessing Personal Resilience
Securing The Future
RECONCILING

FIGURE 2

characteristics and movement. The major identified processes, with component parts, then, are proposed to follow the order of discerning life/death, evaluating relationship with parents, and preparing to outlive. As diagramed, these major processes, and component elements, are connected by interlinking lines to denote possible subsequent movement, allowing for individual variation between, or among, all parts of the model.

The second goal of data analysis, locating and describing the basic social psychological process (BSPP) by which adults attempt to resolve the problem of facing the inevitable loss of their parents, resulted in the identification of "reconciling self to inevitable loss" as the core category/variable and BSPP, which linked the data and explained the variation within the study. Additionally, "triggers" or precipitating factors were determined as preceding, and acting within, the process of "reconciling self to inevitable loss".

In this chapter, results will be presented in five sections. The "triggering" factors are first detailed, followed by definitions and outlines of the three major processes, a description of the core BSPP, "reconciling self to inevitable loss", with resultant theory and finally, presentation of a negative case as illustrative of a non-conforming pattern atypical of the BSPP established in the study.

Direct quotations are used to illustrate the range of experiences expressed in the interviews, as well as patterns common among the informants. Participants in the study are variously referred to as informants, participants or adults with anonymity preserved at all times. Lastly, the terms "many" and "most" are applied as meaning "majority" in this discussion.

Triggers

Two major precipatory factors, developmental change and crises, were determined by the analysis of data as causing and/or involved in the process of "reconciling self to inevitable loss" for informants in the study (See Figure 2). While "developmental changes" signified expected changes occurring within a continuous pattern of maturation and growth, "crises" denoted sudden, unexpected changes, often involving traumatic loss or near-loss. These factors were assessed as highly individual in timing, character and importance to the adult, yet influential, nonetheless, on each adult as they considered the eventual deaths of their parents. At times operating independently of one another, at times in conjunction or with compounded effect, these triggering agents drew from the participants' direct personal experiences, or from the experiences of others which contained personal significance to the informants. The following are a sampling of developmental changes and/or crises which the adults in the study described as affecting their views of the nature of change and transition and which bear presently upon their anticipation of losing their parents:

> ...my father died quite suddenly, and I found out as soon as I came home from school.
>
> ...I had a friend of mine die when I was in Grade 12 and that feeling came back again...it was just like the coldest feeling you've ever had...it's very empty.
>
> ...I'm nearing my 30's (and I've had) a recent breakup with my boyfriend.
>
> ...another person that I lost, who was quite as close to me, was my brother's girlfriend, through an accident, and that made me very much aware of the suddenness of death.
>
> ...it was a very sudden change when she (the family dog) died...it was very dramatic (and) made me aware of the pain associated with death.
>
> ...seeing a few wrinkles, grey hairs and being aware, made aware of my own mortality, and the mortality of my parents.
>
> ...my father has really slowed down, he's really a high speed guy, gets a lot of activity in...(but) through the progression of the last few years, I've seen him really slow down...it's the aging factor.
>
> ...dad had a near-death experience 4 1/2 years ago...surgery, and his life was definitely in question.
>
> ...there was a 6 week period, where every other week, someone either died, or nearly died. There was cancer in my cousin, my aunt had a stroke...my sister-in-law got in a car accident with a train, my supervisor got cancer...who else, oh yeah, P. died.

As illustrated in the above, while the variety of "triggering" developmental changes or crises varied considerably among the adults, each incident, or set of incidents, bore particular significance to the speaker. Whether the loss (or near-loss) of a loved family pet, parent, close family member, friend or associate, increased awareness of one's own aging, or aging/developmental change in others, the affects of living at considerable geographical distance from parents as one informant outlined, or the recent birth of his first child for another, the impact and meaning of such triggers appeared quite unique to each of the participants. Although highly individual, such responses often led to consideration of matters related to the general phenomena and process of life and death. This transition to more general considerations, emerging from the particulars of developmental changes and/or crises, is illustrated in the elaboration of a previous quotation, containing elements of both "triggering" factors:

> I'm 28, and I guess I'm coming to a point in my life where I'm starting to question the meaning of life, and why I'm here...that's partly because I'm nearing my 30's, and partly because of a recent breakup with my boyfriend...

Discerning Life and Death

Definition

Discerning life and death here refers to the consideration, by informants, of matters related to the nature and process of existence. Such contemplation is undertaken, as outlined in the previous section, "Triggers", in response to developmental changes and/or life-crises, and applied in an effort to perceive and understand, in general terms, the phenomenon of life and death as it affects self and others. Rather than a sophisticated ontological examination of the subject, discerning life and death encompasses a more basic pondering by informants of the nature of change, including death and its affect upon their lives and the lives of others:

> (getting older)...I came to question the nature of existence, is there a heaven when there's so much suffering, so much unfairness...I came to question what life was all about...things changing, you can never really rely on anything (with) the impermanence of things.

Discerning life and death has two components: questioning life and death and anticipating future changes.

Questioning Life and Death

Generated by reference to developmental changes and/or life-crises, a majority of informants engaged in general philosophical musing on the context and process of life and death. These reflections often included mention of future change, while not examining in detail the specific nature or effects of that change.

Perhaps the most dominant reflection expressed by participants was upon the mortal nature of life and the finite nature of death. In their comments, the adults cited a blend of beliefs, realizations and acknowledgements concerning the terms of existence, the imperishable/perishable nature of their "selves" and parents, and views upon the conclusive or inconclusive nature of death. One informant spoke of his own, and his siblings' view that their father would never die, while two other informants offered differing beliefs concerning life following death. Each informant, however, spoke of a growing awareness of their own mortality as a result of developmental changes or life-crises:

> ...this happens when you get older in life, that you think about your own eventual mortality; you start to realize that, hey, I'm going to die...
>
> ...it was quite strange at the time of his (father's) death, because we always figured he'd live forever...that's one thing you come to terms with afterwards, you always expect to see that individual again.
>
> ...after the death of an adult, or a parent, someone you really care about, it's like you start to realize, yeah, you're not going to be down here forever...
>
> ...I don't have a very firm belief in heaven and after-life, in that sense, where we all get together and see each other again...
>
> ...my own belief (is) that this life I'm now living is not going to end somehow, it'll be transformed...

One adult had pause to consider the significance of an individual life,

> ...you're on this earth for a certain amount of time, and then you kick-off and that's it, and if you die, who really will notice?

and to reflect, as did other informants, upon the nature and durability of relationships, as well as the worth of investing effort toward them:

> ...a dear, old aunt of mine died, who was like a second mother to me, and her loss meant a lot to me...when she passed away suddenly, I started thinking about it...I started thinking about relationships...nothing is really permanent...
>
> (experiencing loss)...really made me think...everyone's just going to die, why bother with anyone...you're still going to lose them in the end.

Another adult called into question the purpose behind death, remarking on the "unnatural" nature of accidental, or sudden death which seems to defy or usurp an accepted or expected order to life:

> ...there was a young, healthy, vibrant girl who was killed in a car accident. This sudden purposeless death...it was unnatural. It wasn't part of the process of birth, moving toward old age and finally death; it was cut off before the experience of all that - the chain of life or whatever...

Lack of control was another theme in comments related to a parent's death:

> ...you don't want them to go, and yet you realize that you have no control over the situation.

Most informants, however, concluded their remarks concerning the nature and process of life and death by expressing summary, often philosophical, opinions on the subject. These statements often established broad attitudes toward the nature of change and decline. While some remarks contained stronger trepidation than others concerning such change and loss, all appeared to concede their inevitable nature. The following represent the mixture of statements:

> ...everything changes, everything is impermanent...
>
> ...everyone has to go through it (losing others, dying oneself)
>
> ...you're never given any guarantees in life.
>
> ...nothing is really permanent, and you have to take things like that with a grain of salt.
>
> ...I'll be very upset to have to go through the whole grieving period (when parents die) but...I think I would understand and know it's just part of life...you have to carry on...

Anticipating Future Change

As outlined in the preceding section, informants' broad reflections upon the nature and process of life and death, led often to consideration of specific future change. Promoted by developmental change and/or life-crises, adults in this study focused thought and emotion upon their parents as meaningful subjects of expected or anticipated future loss:

> (living geographically distant from parents)...every time I see them, I really think that it might be the last...I guess dad nearly dying that time, too, no matter how many times you can see it in other people, you don't think about it that clearly until it does nearly happen.
>
> I think about it (losing mother) quite often...she's in her 60's now and, obviously, the older you get, the greater your risk of passing on is.

Parental Aging. Most adults focused upon the present and anticipated aging of their parents. They wondered about their (informants') ability to cope with the challenge of witnessing, and caring for, their parents in decline, and wished their parents the least suffering and most dignity in that experience:

> I'm a little anxious about the decline of the old age years...there are those symptoms of old age creeping on, and it does make me anticipate their deaths, or not so much their deaths but having to cope with their loss of physical and mental abilities, and what I would do in that situation...
>
> ...the combination of it being hard for them, to help them have their dignity and, at the same time, look after them, I think that's a very big challenge.

While participants noted parental aging and decline as an anticipated change in the future, elaboration on the subject occurred later in the context of participants' discussing problems/challenges they presently face, or anticipate facing, with respect to that aging. As such, further aspects related to parental aging are discussed in the section, Assessing Challenges to Future Relationship.

Form and Timing of Parental Death. Most adults speculated on the type or form of deaths which might occur, incorporating their hopes and fears in their comments:

> ...also, I fear the type of death, you know...I want it to be as peaceful as possible, I suppose that's quite natural...I don't want it to be at all violent, I fear that sort of thing.

One adult, citing past family history, felt that heart attack or stroke were not unlikely agents of illness or death for her parents, while another adult, pointing to his parents' abuse of alcohol, worried that such a lifestyle might contribute to fatal outcome. Yet another adult expressed concern that her parents might meet tragedy in a car accident. Such considerations tended to centre on concerns related to the timing of death or change. Would change or death suddenly occur, or would mental and physical decline of the informants' parents take place gradually? Typical of others in the study, one adult commented there were consequences for her in either event. Sudden, unexpected death would preclude saying farewell to her parents or engaging in desired preparation for such an occurrence, while slower, more prolonged decline in her parents may pose its own complex of challenges for herself and others:

> (with) sudden death, there wouldn't be any good-byes or preparations, but I've always thought if there was a slow death...if I had a long time to know, I'd certainly want to be there...being a long distance away, what could I do? Would I quit my job, would I pull up stakes and risk everything to be there?
>
> ...if they live long enough to get rather senile, how hard that is to cope with and watch...while you don't wish for them to die early, you hope that maybe they get nipped in the bud...that they won't have to go through indignities, nor would other people have to tear apart their lives to look after them.

Order of Parental Death. Many adults stated concern regarding the order or sequence of their parents' deaths. Two of the participants who had each already experienced the loss of one of their parents, spoke of the effects upon themselves, and on their families, of having lost those parents first. Although preference between parents was not an issue for these individuals, both remarked upon how the order of their parents deaths had consequence for them in terms of the nature of their subsequent relationship with the surviving parent. (see: Evaluating Relationship with Parents).

For most adults with both parents still living, the prospect of either parent dying before the other was equally tragic, as was the prospect, expressed by one participant, of both parents dying at the same time:

> ...as far as who passes on first, I've thought a lot about it...if both my parents were to go at the same time, I would be devastated.

An exception, however, to attributing equal effect to both parents' deaths was contained in the preference, clearly stated by one informant, of surviving the death of a particular parent over the other. This preference was based upon several considerations including the preferred parent being viewed as a more necessary/desirable support following loss, a wish to offer the preferred parent a better quality of life, feelings of uncertainty on the part of the informant about her personal ability to help the undesired parent with tasks of living, and the informant's doubt concerning her desire to extend such help to the undesired parent, in light of their presently unsatisfying relationship:

> ...if one were to go before the other, I would hope that it would be my father, so that I could help my mother see life in a more pleasant kind of way...also, I'd want my mother to be there to cope with feelings I'd have after my father passed on...if mother were to go (first)...I'd be frightened of the future because I don't how I would be able to help my dad deal with living on his own, and I' not sure if I'd want to as much...

Personal Loss and Personal Gain. Each of the adults spoke of the anticipated loss of their parent(s) in terms of its expected positive and/or negative effects for themselves, family and friends, as well as particular losses and gains they envisioned resulting from their parents' deaths. For most, such considerations were undertaken with ambivalent feelings:

> in anticipating my parents death, I think I have very strong mixed feelings...
>
> ...it has two part to it, part of it will be a relief, and part of it will be a sad experience.

Among the key losses or negative effects involved in losing their parents, one adult spoke to her feelings of losing an aspect of her own being and identity,

> I feel so close to her that she is almost a part of myself, and if I were to lose her, it would be like losing a large part of myself...a lot of my identity comes from and through experiences with my mother.

while another adult remarked that losing her parents would signify the loss of her childhood,

> ...well, I won't be a kid any more...one thing about still having parents that are alive, is that you're always still a kid, there's somebody that still calls you a kid.

and yet another adult commented on her sense of losing a place or location to call home, as well as connection with her past:

> things will be different, like, where will home be? There's something about mothers and fathers for me...it brings me back to my rootedness, I guess, in the farm, in my growing up, in that family...it will be like I'm rootless, somehow, not grounded, there's no centre for me, no place to go back to...

Alternatively, adults identified positive elements anticipated in the loss of their parents. Several of the informants expressed feeling restricted or limited at times by their parents attitudes and expectations. They remarked that the deaths of their parents would allow or provide the opportunity for them to pursue the course of their own decisions and choices in life removed from a sense of depending upon, or obligation to, their parents. This gaining of independence from their parents, for several of the adults, amounted to a maturing of self and gaining of adulthood:

> ...they still regard me as a child...I think there will be a sense that I will never be a complete adult until my parents are gone...that will be both a mournful and a maturing experience, in the sense that I will lose the capacity to be an irresponsible child.
>
> Part of me, I think, will be able to be an adult when she's gone...it'll take that experience for me to feel like I'm grown up...living my life faithful to my own integrity, and not concerned about being who my mother wants me to be...not feeling obliged.
>
> ...losing my parents...will force me to become more independent, and that's something, in some ways, I look forward to...being able to make decisions on my own.

Some adults in the study viewed the anticipated loss of their parents as having consequences for their sibling relationships. One female participant, whose father was already deceased, wondered whether the loss of her mother as the matriarch of the family would occasion "shifts" in the relationships between she and her brothers and sisters, or if ties between some or all might be broken altogether. Other adults saw the loss of their parents as possibly bringing siblings closer to one another:

> I know whoever passed away, whether it be my father or my mother, or both, it would likely bring my brother and I together in ways that we really don't know...probably in much closer, deeper ways.
>
> it'll probably be an opportunity, actually, to have a relationship with my brothers and sisters on a different level...I look forward to that...

Regardless of their particular relationship with their parents, all participants identified their parents, in the words of one informant, as "special people" not necessarily in terms of the quality of their persons, as much as in the uniqueness of their role as parents. For some of the adults, the parental role was identified with being "the most sure source of love", "always there", "the one who will nurture me, even though I'm older", or "the only individual who has seen it (adult-child's life) all the way through". Even for one adult, whose relationship with her father had long not been characterized by either happiness or closeness, there was the plainly stated acknowledgement, "he is my father". Consideration of future change specifically the anticipated loss of parents, coupled with recognition of the unique and valued role of these parents, led most adults to examine more closely the nature and quality of their relationship with their parents.

Evaluating Relationship with Parents

Stemming from the anticipation of future changes, particularly the expected loss of parents, adults in the study each spoke about aspects of their relationship with their parent(s):

> (anticipating loss of parents)...really makes you re-evaluate your relationship with them, and it really makes you think about the kind of way you want to be with them...

Definition

Evaluating relationship with parents refers to the adult's description of his/her development and functional relationship with his/her parents. This domain involved three time foci, past, present and future, and where the participants' primary focus is upon their relationships with their parents, comments on occasion, extend to other family members or the family unit as a whole. Evaluating relationship with parents involves three components: evaluating parent/past relationship, determining desired relationship, and assessing future challenges to relationship.

Evaluating Present/Past Relationship

Upbringing and Earlier Relationship with Parents/Family.

Supplied as background information, and providing a route to the present day, participants recalled factual and chronological details related to their personal, parental and family histories. Often, however, recollections were more anecdotal in nature, involving the informants' assessments of the setting(s) of their early lives, quality of their upbringing and influences of their parents in their lives:

> ...I was born and raised in a suburb of T., which my parents were both raised in as well. They met when they were both in high school, and they're still living there...at the time they grew up, the town was really the country, dirt roads, the whole bit...my mother has said she wanted to have children because she really wanted to have friends...that she didn't have anyone her own age in her neighbourhood when she was growing up, and she was very lonely as a child, and she always wanted to have children to play with...we went (together) to the art museum, the science museum, the symphony and ballets...I think my mother did a great job of raising us in that way...
>
> We had a large family in B., my mom and dad's family were there and I had a lot of cousins to play with...it was like having 11 brothers and sisters, it was fun...

While some recollections were pleasant to recall,

> When we'd come home from school, she (mother) used to ask us about every detail of our day, you know, and I just loved it, I'd tell her every detail of my day...it was wonderful, it was really nice...

others spoke to more turbulent time of personal development and relationships with parents:

> When I was a teenager, things were very wild...I went completely the opposite direction of what they wanted, and went through a really bad period with them...I think that's probably pretty normal for teenagers...

Still other recollections identified certain regret regarding missed or avoided opportunities for emotional closeness with a particular parent and within the family,

> It was hard to get close to him (father), I mean really close...he was close in the sense that he'd do a lot with us, he was certainly a dedicated father in that respect, he was a family man...but, in terms of talking about feelings, he sorta pretended he didn't have any and he wasn't too tolerant about other people's...

or the presence of ambivalent feelings towards parents and home-life which persist to the present day:

> I grew up on a farm, which was a very significant experience for me...limiting in some ways, but rich in others...a very happy experience for me in some ways... (I come) from a very large family, my family relationships have always been very important to me...but, as kids, and growing up in the family, because my father was alcoholic, I think that really colored my experience of the family, I know it did...I felt very close and very distant from my family at the same time, kind of a funny combination growing up, and actually, today I still kinda feel that way.

For each participant, regardless of the particular memories evoked, recalling details of their upbringing and earlier relationship with their parents represented an attempt to locate themselves within, and gain perspective upon circumstances, events and conditions of the past. Worth noting, however, is that those participants most inclined to remark and focus upon the past, were those who either spoke of having experienced trauma and/or instability in their lives (one participant recalled, with strong emotion, the loss of his father at the age of 12, while another informant commented upon the disruption and pain in her own and her family's development occasioned by her father's alcoholism) or, conversely, those participants who felt particularly strong bonding and stability in their upbringings. Interestingly, each of these participants tended to feel greater need for strategies to prepare themselves for eventual loss (see: Preparing to Outlive).

In any event, this delving into the past, searching for their place within it, seemed aimed by the participants at probing their understanding of family and personal origins and development, as well as providing a context and basis for present assessment of their parents and their relationship with them.

Present Relationship with Parents/Family. Interspersed among recollections of the past, informants often opined about their present relationship with their parents. At various times, focusing upon their parents' personalities or characters, quality of the parental relationship, or their own direct functioning and interaction with their parents, informants' comments often noted similarities and differences between their present and past relationships with parents. As with their evaluation of the past, informants depicted having present relationships with parents ranging widely in the degree of satisfaction or happiness they now offer to those involved. While one participant expressed still feeling like a child emotionally when around her mother, another adult described having a mutually respectful and supportive relationship with her parents. For some of the adults, developmental changes in themselves and their parents, the effects of time or, in the case of one informant, geographic distance had resulted in an improved relationship with their parents, while others cited current resentments or the absence of trust and respect in assessing the present quality of relationship they maintain with their parents. For the latter adults, emotional unavailability or distance on the part of their parents was identified as a major obstacle or challenge to an improved relationship (see: Assessing Future Challenges). The following illustrate the aforementioned areas of focus and the diversity of experiences expressed by the adults.

> ...my relationship with my parents is very good, I feel very close to them, they're very supportive of me, and I'm very supportive of them...
>
> I think my parents and I have had a much better relationship since I moved away from home...I do have a much better appreciation of them as people now than certainly when I lived with them....
>
> ...my mom and I don't do that (spend time together), and there's a lot of things I want to do (with her)...I feel a lot of resentment because (she) won't spend time with me.
>
> ...with my father, it's a very superficial relationship, I love him because he's my father, but there's not a lot of respect or trust that go with the love of my father.
>
> ...when I'm around my mother, I feel like a little girl often, not able to assert myself or be an adult with her...it's as if I feel kept as a little girl with her emotionally, (by) my own fear of being real with her.
>
> ...she's (mother) a very selfless person, in the sense that she's giving and puts other people before herself, other family members before herself.
>
> I like them, I think they're lots of fun...I'm enjoying seeing them change as they get older...
>
> ...we're closer (self and parents), and (I'm) closer to dad than I was for years, I think more because of him than me, 'cause he's more open...tells me things he used not to tell himself, I think...he's much softer, and certainly there's room for feelings...

In spite of whatever quality of relationship the adults in the study had either experienced in their upbringings, or presently maintain with their parents, each gave recognition of the unique role of their parents in their lives. As noted in the quotation cited at the beginning of this section, evaluation of their (present and past) relationships resulted in many of the informants considering a desired nature of relationship with their parents.

Determining Desired Relationship

Based upon an evaluation of their past and present relationship with their parents, informants determined for themselves the kind and quality of relationship with their parents they desired for the future. Each of the adults indicated a desire to either maintain the quality of a relationship with their parents which they find presently satisfying and compatible, or to improve the quality of a relationship less satisfying or harmonious. While in the latter case, informants expressed some bitterness concerning their relationship with their parents, and discouragement as to the prospects of an improved relationship, each spoke to their desire at the least, for a better, closer bond with their parents. This desire was embodied in the wish by these informants to break through certain emotional barriers, make amends for past periods of upset and discord, and to more effectively communicate with their parents before future loss occurs:

> (I want) to make up for those bad times before the inevitable happens...
>
> I'd like to cut through this hard shell he's got around him, and try to alleviate some of these feelings I have...

> ...you want to talk with them, and you want to say 'you know, I really love you...(although) you drive me up the wall sometimes'
>
> I'm wanting a relationship of some significance with her before she dies...I want that kind of ability to be real and to be open, and to be cared about and to care about her.

Alternatively, those adults whose relationships with their parents already offer desired qualities, spoke of wanting to return in kind the affection they had received from their parents, as well as to continue enjoying them while the opportunity remains:

> ...the tables are turned, and as they age, it's my turn to give them what they need...what I want to give, which is companionship.
>
> I just want to enjoy them while they're here...

Assessing Future Challenges to Relationship

Evaluation of their present, past and desired relationships with their parents led most adults to identify obstacles or challenges they foresaw to those relationships. Challenges were noted particularly in the areas of resolving outstanding differences in their relationships, coping with their parents aging, and communicating their thoughts and feelings regarding their parents' anticipated deaths.

Societal and Family Taboos. Even for those adults currently experiencing satisfying relationships with their parents, such influences as societal or family attitudes toward death and dying were seen as potential impediments to engaging in free and open discussion of feelings toward their parents' anticipated death. Several adults spoke of feeling these kinds of restrictions in a western society which, in their view, denies death as an intricate part of life, emphasizes youth and beauty, and endeavors to keep people alive forever:

> ...a lot of times in our society, it seems like we never talk about death and when people die...we dress them up and make them look like they're alive, so we don't have to deal with the ugly aspects of death or, you know, even think about it...we have all kinds of euphemisms and things of that nature...
>
> ...we have a society that seems to emphasize youth and immortality, and we don't like to think about death...
>
> ...our western view of death is so compartmentalized, like you live and then you die and it's all separate... there's less a sense of death being part of the fabric of life, so it isn't something that's talked about much...you try to keep people alive, and people just don't want to face it.

Other adults noted restrictions in their own families which they felt, would be critical of such premature and "morbid" thinking:

> ...to talk about it with the family, they just think you're morbid...I guess that's part of the attitude, if you talk about death, you're not living enough...to talk about it with mom and dad, I think I would be criticized for having feelings before you have to have them.

One adult recounted the particular ire of her father stemming from the informant's attempt to enquire as to the financial security of her mother in the event of her father's death:

> He got so angry, he got furious at me and wouldn't listen...he had all kinds of assumptions that I was being judgemental...that I felt he didn't have enough money to support his wife, like the old fashioned thing of not being a good enough bread winner...that I wanted him dead because I was talking about it.

Resolving Differences. A major obstacle to achieving a desired relationship with their parents, and obtaining a measure of personal reconciliation to the thought of their parents' anticipated deaths lay, for some participants, in the challenging prospect of resolving outstanding differences with their parents. Participants identified various factors as underlying their difficulty in resolving such differences. For one adult, her father's closed and inflexible personality seemed to preclude improvement in their relationship,

> ...it's never going to be quite resolved because of the nature of my father, his character isn't one that's very open, or where you can conclude these things before its too late...his character is very much set in plaster.

for another, his mother's lifestyle presents an obstacle,

> ...she drinks a lot and it's very hard for me to talk with her about these real, emotional issues, because she can't handle them herself...

while for another, a recognition of her mother's, and her own, limited capacity to presently discuss sensitive issues with one another acts as an impediment:

> I've had to explore what is really possible with my mother, and not have expectations of what is not possible with her at all...whenever I've tried, she shuts me up because she can't take it, and I can't take it either, probably because I don't pursue it.

Aging Parents. The aging of parents as a certain indicator of their mortality and future deaths was viewed as posing a unique set of challenges by informants. One adult explained her challenge in terms of "shifting role" where she would be required to attend to her parents' needs,

> ...right now it's still parent-daughter, they're still able to look after themselves and, occasionally, they like to look after me...but, when the day comes where the roles shift, if the day comes, and I'm looking after them, I think those will be challenges...

while another adult cited her parents' declining capacities as testing her ability to treat her parents in a manner she would most wish to:

> ...little things like my mother's hearing going, or my father's memory going, adds to the difficulty in being nice, patient, in being ways that I'd like to be...

Other adults spoke of the personal "adjustment" in thinking and feeling they would need to make as they witnessed their parents become less active and resilient than the figures they had heretofore been. They identified the taxing emotional choices involved in attempting to assist parents maintain optimum independence and dignity in their lives - whether, for instance, to themselves provide direct physical care for their parents, if so required, or to consign that responsibility to others. Here, the earlier noted challenge of having open and frank discussion with parents, was seen as pivotal by some adults in terms of their ability to plan for the future.

Attempting to be a Good Child. Finally, some adults noted certain pressure involved in attempting to always behave as a "good" or "perfect" child for their parents. While the adults expressed wanting to be kindly toward their parents, they also spoke of wanting to be "honest" with themselves, and to maintain their "integrity", by not manufacturing accommodating behaviour to conform to their parents expectations and attitudes. As one participant remarked, being "real" with herself and her parent involved being regarded with some equality, as an adult:

> I mean, I'm an adult, she's an adult...why can't there be sort of a realness and straightness between us?

Although the specific difficulties differed among the adults, most noted either ongoing or envisioned challenges both to their desired relationship with their parents, and to their own abilities to cope with their parents' aging and eventual deaths.

Overall, adults' evaluation of their relationship with their parents, as subjects of anticipated loss, resulted in a process of preparing themselves to meet and outlive that expected loss.

Preparing to Outlive

Motivated through developmental change and/or response to life-crises to discern the nature and process of future change and loss, and to evaluate their relationship with their parents, as subjects of anticipated loss, informants engaged in a process of preparing themselves to experience and live past the expected deaths of their parents.

Definition

Preparing to outlive here refers to the process of readying self to survive or live past the focus of anticipated loss. The processing may be internal (psychological) or external (social) to self, cognitive, emotional or behaviorial, involving as such, all thought, feelings and actions employed in an effort to adjust, adapt to, strategize, or otherwise plan for the event of future loss. The process of preparing to outlive has two major components: assessing personal resilience, and securing the future.

Assessing Personal Resilience

In anticipating the eventual loss of their parents and considering the personal impact that loss may bring, informants often took measure of their present and expected abilities to meet and outlive such change. For many of the informants, this "taking stock" or assessment of their personal resilience to change, particularly loss, involved recalling past crises, in the form of losses or near-losses, as well as developmental changes, gauging the nature of those experiences and their outcomes. In this effort to estimate their personal readiness for future loss, participants often commented upon lessons they had learned from previous experience and, in turn, the resources they had either built or seek to build, as they prepare to deal with the kinds of questions one adult succinctly stated:

> ...what will be called from me, and what will I have?

External Resources. Informants cited the importance of friends and family as key sources of support, emotional and otherwise, in the event of loss. For most of the participants, these external resources were viewed as being welcome assistance in time of need. One adult, however, spoke of fearing having to "deal" with her brother at the time of their parents' losses, based on the emotionally distant relationship she and he presently have. The following illustrates the various comments regarding external resources:

> When you're married, there's somebody to help pick you up, as a basket case when you're grieving, that you're really solidly attached to as family.
>
> ...it's nice to know I have brothers that'd help out...
>
> I also realize the importance of other friends, and relatives to help you through the loss...
>
> ...my brother and I are not the closest of people...I fear having to deal with him upon my parents' death(s)...

Internal Resources. Informants spoke also in terms of measuring qualities of resilience and learning within themselves as they ready for anticipated loss. One adult identified having dealt with the recent dissolution of a long-term relationship as providing certain internal strengths which may serve her in coping with future loss:

> ...having to deal with this recent breakup...made me get things from inside myself, and that's helped a lot, I'm sure, in anticipating my parents leaving this world...I know I'm strong enough to get whatever it takes to get through things from inside me.

Another adult cited the death of her father, and her loss of other significant individuals, as providing her with familiarity with the process of relinquishing hold on ties which bind herself to others:

> ...even as I anticipate the loss of my mother, I've lived it before with my father, I've lived it before with other people, that kind of letting go...

This same adult expressed her feeling that the many "little (emotional) losses" she had experienced in the course of a difficult relationship with her mother had also contributed in readying her for the eventual loss and "letting-go" of her mother:

> ...none of the feelings I'm going to feel when my mother dies are going to be foreign to me...I suppose all the little (emotional) losses I've had with her are preparing me for the final letting-go and losing her.

Still other adults commented on feeling that memories of their parents words and behaviour would provide valuable tools for dealing with future change and loss, although they clearly distinguished memories as an unpreferred replacement for their parents:

> I guess that, even if they're dead, I'll use their memories at the rough times...like, what they would have said, or could have said or done, and hope that, while not as good as having them there, will be a good substitute.
>
> ...the memories will be strong, I'm sure that will help me pull through a lot, but at times of crisis in my life,

> and when I'll need someone to turn to, I'm not sure I'll have anything to substitute what was there...

Whether their personal assessments of internal and external resources resulted in estimating they possessed positive, negative or mixed feelings regarding their ability to cope with the affects of future change and loss, the majority of informants identified measures they had either already taken, engaged in, or plan to pursue in order to secure a desired relationship with their parents.

Securing the Future

As preparation for the actual loss of their parents, and for their lives following that event, informants described undertaking mental, emotional and behaviorial activity to ensure a quality of life with regard to their parents for the period remaining before and to come after their parents' death. This "tying-up loose ends" as one adult termed the process of fashioning or securing a desired future with her parents, particularly with mind to outliving their loss, was contingent, for many of the participants, upon the kinds of challenges outlined in the section Assessing Future Challenges. Such activity also involved both internal and external activities similar in focus to those presented in the preceding section Assessing Personal Resilience. Here, however, specific measures or strategies were described by informants as undertaken to develop and ensure a desired future based, as one adult described, upon consideration of the quality of future most favoured for their parents and themselves:

> (anticipating loss of parents)...makes you really think about where you would like to be later on...

As described in the section Determining Desired Relationship, participants wished either to maintain or improve their present relationships with parents and, in terms of securing a desired future, all sought the optimal quality of future for themselves.

Making Contact. A majority of informants outlined efforts already undertaken, or intended, to achieve closer physical and emotional connection with their parents, so as not to have future regret, or feel "unfinished" that such contact had either not taken place or had not been attempted before time no longer allowed. For some of the adults, this involved making increased telephone contact, letter-writing or visiting with parents, especially if living at a distance, while for others it meant attempting greater sharing of thoughts and feelings about the nature of their relationship and the expectation of future change involving separation and loss. Others still spoke of displaying more physical and emotional affection toward their parents:

> ...I call them on the telephone every other week, sometimes every week, I visit them as often as I can, in terms of holiday time...(so) if they were to die today, or next week, or two years from now, there wouldn't be a sense of "oh, I should have visited them or I should have called them".
>
> ...there was one time in particular, I had this talk with my dad, and had decided that I didn't want either of us to die without this being said...it was one of those things what I would have carried with me, and so I did that...
>
> ...I'm going to try this, I'm going to sit down and go through it with them...discuss how they felt when they lost (my) grandparents, see what they think, and then share (my) own experiences.
>
> ...there's also a sense of urgency to take care of unfinished business...I try to do things like hug him (father), and do emotional sort of things...get these things out in the open now, so I don't have to live with this, the regret that I should have done something and didn't.

Spending Time/Sharing Experiences. As an extension of the contact-making efforts just described, two adults outlined plans to take extended vacations with their respective mothers. In each case, the informants expressed a desire to spend increased time, build emotional ties, and create positive memories for the present-day and future:

> ...this trip is about all that, spending some time with my mother, doing something she's always wanted to do...a present day experience that we can build a bond in...
>
> ...this trip I'm going on with my mother for a month, although in some regards, I'm not looking forward to it, because, you know, with your mother you don't kick up your heels as much as you might with a friend...but, I'm

> looking at it as a way of spending a month together where we can share a lot, and have that experience to look back upon if I ever do lose her...

Preparing Within. Some adults spoke of cognitive and emotional measures they were taking inside themselves to secure their desired near and long-term futures. For one adult, fearful of feeling lingering guilt over her poor relationship with her father, this involved attempting to understand her father's character and behavior:

> I'm thinking about ways in which I can prevent a little bit of the guilt afterwards...in my father's case, I'm trying to really understand why he is the way he is...

For another adult, re-affirming her personal belief in a form of after-life served as a present and future comfort in the prospect of a continuing relationship with her parents:

> ...her dying doesn't seem to be the end for me and, I suppose, that coincides with my own belief that this life that I'm living now is not going to end somehow, it'll be transformed, I'll continue living, and she'll continue living with me...

Yet another adult identified mental preparations she is currently undertaking, in view of her parents' aging, to emotionally accept herself as a grown adult:

> ...they're changing right now...(and) in that way, I'm saying sorta "get my act together and realize I'm a full-grown adult now...".

Reconciling Self to Inevitable Loss:

The Basic Social Psychological Process

As outlined in Chapter Two, Methodology, analysis of data looks to establish a core category/basic social psychological process (BSPP) which contains two or more stages taking place over time, recurs throughout the data, and serves to both link and explain variation within the data. Employed by participants to address and resolve the social and/or psychological problem which is relevant and disconcerting for them, the BSPP provides for subsequent development of the theory.

Informants' discussion of their anticipation of parental death, as "looking ahead to their deaths" and "having to face the final loss", as well as their reference to the anticipated loss as "inevitable", "certain", or "guaranteed", resulted in the identification of "facing inevitable loss" as the problem shared by all participants in the study.

The basic social psychological process (BSPP) by which the informants sought to address and resolve that problem, based on their need as expressed by some, to "come to terms" and "live peacefully" with such loss, was determined as "reconciling self to inevitable loss". In an effort to achieve some measure of reconciliation within themselves regarding their anticipation of parental death, adults endeavoured to reach a degree of resolution regarding their relationships with their parents, assume acceptance of the inevitability of death/loss, and achieve adjustments to being alone/continuing to live. They undertook to "reconcile" themselves by discerning the nature and process of life and death, evaluating their relationships with their parents, and preparing themselves to outlive their parents as the subjects of anticipated loss.

Accepting the inevitability of death, for most of the adults,lay in recognizing, with positive, negative, or mixed feelings, the "reality" of death, and in developing a personal philosophy or attitude toward death and loss. Recognition was expressed through acknowledging the existence or occurrence of death, and the expectation that death would conclude the earthly existence of parents, self and others, resulting in loss for those who survive. Personal attitudes toward the nature and process of life and death were characterized by broad views citing such aspects as the felt lack of influence over death, the universality of death and the need to continue living for those surviving:

> I expect the death of my parents at some point...
>
> ...ultimately, those others are going to be gone, and even you are going to be gone...

> I think anticipating the loss of them (parents), however painful those thoughts might be, is like a little bit of reality coming in to wake you up and say "hey, this isn't going to be around forever".
>
> I feel more prepared for it now...I think in terms of the cold reality of things, of not having that person there for you forever.
>
> I recognize the fact that they won't always be here.
>
> ...you don't want them to go and yet you realize you have no control over the situation.
>
> ...everyone has to go through it...
>
> ...you have to carry on...

Reaching a degree of resolution regarding their relationship with their parents meant, for many adults, utilizing the remaining time with parents to clarify their mutual needs. It also involved striving, in conjunction with their parents, within themselves, or both, for an improved understanding of the relationship, so as to lessen the possibility of later feeling regret or remorse for not having made effort of that kind:

> I don't want (her) to go, but I know (she's) going to have to one day...and I'd like to talk about it now so when she does go, I'll know we've talked everything out, and it's O.K.
>
> ...There's that sense of urgency to get things out in the open, so I don't have to live with this, the regrets that I should have done something and didn't.
>
> I will know upon his death, that at least I tried, and that the responsibility wasn't necessarily mine to get any closer.

> (I'd like to) take advantage of situations when they make themselves available...
>
> (having satisfying relationship with parents) ...not only does it make it more pleasant now, that will make me able to accept their deaths.
>
> ...most of the work I did about letting them go (was) mainly working it out in my head and heart...
>
> I have more sympathy for her as a person...I think I will feel the sadness, but I will also feel reconciled with some of my relationship with her.

Adjusting to being alone/continuing to live meant, for the adults, adapting to, or otherwise preparing for, the loss of their parents. This included recognizing the fact that such loss would deprive them of individuals possessing unique and special status in their lives, as well as having made effort to secure within themselves, and from others, the resources or abilities they deemed adequate or necessary to pursue a self-satisfying quality of life. For most informants, successful adjustment, or reconcilement, to being alone was associated with gaining and accepting roles of full independence and "adulthood":

> ...this special person is not going to live forever...
>
> ...with her gone, I think I'll feel I don't have a home, a place to go to...and that's kind of scary for me.
>
> I'm very much aware of our aloneness, and how you can't define yourself in terms of others forever...
>
> I realize there will be a light at the end of the tunnel...I know I have the strength within me, from somewhere to deal with such losses...I know I can cope with it...at the same time, it does present a lot of anxiety.

> I'll come into my own more...I'll just be me.
>
> This letting-go is about growing up, I think, and becoming an adult.

Negative Case

As discussed in Chapter Two, Methodology, through descriptions by Field & Morse (1985), and Pinhey & Sanders (1983), the negative case provides for greater dimension and density to the generated theory by identifying cases or social/psychological process which violate, or run contrary, to the established pattern. Such a case was identified in the remarks of one participant which was dissimilar to those of the other informants where aspects of the established processes of discerning life and death, evaluating relationship with parents, and preparing to outlive were concerned. Although the informant noted certain developmental changes in his life, he indicated his preference to remain oriented to the present in his thinking and none of the changes was identified as precipitating thought of his parents' future deaths. Terming both his parents as "quite healthy" and his family relationships as "a strong irreplaceable bond", the informant cited no particular crises, involving change or loss, as prefiguring consideration of losing his parents. With the absence of "triggering" developmental changes and/or life-crises, in his own or parents lives, the informant's comments suggested a lack of, or no, need to engage in a process of reconciling self to inevitable loss, as evidenced in his remarks when asked about his need to resolve differences with his parents, or issues related to their future deaths:

> I don't think it's a great priority, and partly because I think we have a fairly good relationship now, we're not friends, in the sense that we're not buddies, and I don't feel a great need to become so...I think that all in our family are quite secure in each other's love, we really do have a strong, irreplaceable bond, and we fairly often do tell each other that we do love each other...I have a desire to live as fully as we can while we're here together...I think I've thought about my own death more than their death...

The presence of "triggering" agents, then, may be seen as crucial factors in the proposed theoretical model. The processes of "anticipating the loss of parents" and "reconciling self to inevitable loss" are directly related to the effects of developmental change and/or crises.

CHAPTER FOUR

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Grounded theory methodology allows for a preliminary search of the scientific literature as a means of establishing a context for the proposed research study. Such initial investigation identifies issues and omissions in the research area pointing to topics for potential examination. Return to the theoretical literature, once a "discovered framework" has been established in the research, provides a valuable source of theoretical sampling which serves to confirm and enhance the developing theory. Glaser (1978), however, cautions against sampling the theory until the latter stages of research, in order for the analyst to avoid being "derailed" from his/her focus in the study:

> This general warning against sampling outside the substantive area before an emergent framework is established cannot be heeded too closely and carefully. Besides undermining the relevance of the substantive area, the literature's focus frequently becomes a "pet" interest of the analyst because of its respected author. (p.51)

The establishment of the research problem "facing inevitable loss", followed by the discoveries of three major processes employed by informants to address and resolve that problem (discerning life and death, evaluating relationship with parents, preparing to outlive), and the core process of "reconciling self to inevitable loss", led to a sampling of the literature and the selection of three general areas of research relevant to the collected data: death and bereavement, parent-child relationships, and adult development and aging.

In the ensuing chapter, following the general outline of research trends and major research contributions in each area, particular aspects of the literature which have direct relationship and significance to findings of the present study will be highlighted and discussed. Those with general knowledge of the literature pertaining to the identified subject areas may wish to proceed to the latter discussion in this chapter.

Death and Bereavement Literature

General Literature. Perhaps nothing has borne greater impact and significance on our human existence than the expectation, event or memory of its demise and absence, reflected in the range of philosophic musing and literary portrayal directed toward the subject and symbolism of death and dying. Such reflection, as Toynbee (1968), Gatch (1969), and others (Hoffman, 1959; Nathanson & DeBold, 1969; Needleman, 1969) have outlined, traces back to man's first mythological, religious and philosophical writings, and continues, uninterrupted, to the most recent of contemporary works. Death, in its many meanings, permeates man's awareness, fictionalization and abstraction of his experience, as he assesses the terms of his mortal condition (Enright, 1983; Feifel, 1959; Glaser & Strauss, 1965; Schneidman, 1976).

Death and Bereavement in the Scientific Literature. The scientific literature on death and bereavement comprises a vast and constantly enlarging body of research. For the most part, "case-historical and theoretical conceptual in nature and scope" (Epstein, Weitz Roback & McKee, 1975, p.55), the research in Thanatology has been significantly ordered by major recent reviews (Osterweis, Soloman & Green, 1984; Parkes, 1972; Raphael, 1983; Shackleton, 1984). In these reviews, such early contributors as Freud (1917) and Lindemann (1944) are noted for developing theoretical systemizations and descriptions of grief-related symptomatology, while later theorists such as Marris (1958), Bowlby (1961, 1980), Parkes (1965, 1970, 1972), Ramsay (1979) and Gauthier and Marshall (1977) are acknowledged for further work in identifying and accounting for grief reactions.

Survivorship and Factors Influencing Grieving. Studies on survivorship have concentrated on three main groups: parental loss by children and adolescents, loss of a child, and loss of a spouse. Research on parental loss by children and adolescents has focused on the dysfunctional or deviant socio-emotional effects occasioned by such loss, including delinquent behavior, underachievement in school, higher divorce rates, and subsequent disorders such as schizophrenia, psychotic depression, and alcoholism. Raphael (1983) and Miller (1971) offer extensive reviews.

Research of parental loss of a child often focuses upon period and mode of death, including: stillbirth, perinatal death, sudden infant death, and loss of an older child through accident or disease. Other areas involve loss of a child through miscarriage, abortion, or suicide (Osterweis et al., 1984; Raphael, 1983).

Major focus in the area of conjugal loss has been the association of somatic and mental illness with bereavement, mortality studies, and aspects of personal and social adjustment following loss (Epstein, Weitz, Robak & McKee, 1979). Numerous studies have also been undertaken identifying such factors as type of death, age, gender, personality, and social class of the survivor, quality of relationship to the deceased, availability of social supports, and view of the world, as variables affecting the grieving process. Other factors include: concurrent stress or crises, previous losses, and religion, culture and occupation of the survivor (DeSpelder & Strickland, 1983). A fourth, although less studied, area of survivorship, the death of a sibling is receiving increased attention (Hogan, 1988).

Theories of Loss and Grief. A variety of theoretical models have been developed to account for normal and pathological processes and outcomes related to bereavement. Often forming the frameworks of therapeutic interventions, these models tend to have characteristics which differ more in emphasis than substance. Major models include: psychoanalytical theory, interpersonal and attachment theory, crisis and stress theory, cognitive and behavioral theories, disease and illness theories, and developmental theory. Osterweiss et al. (1984) outline the main concepts of each of the theories.

Stages and Phases of Grieving. Developmental models describing phases and stages of the grieving and recovery process have been formed by various researchers. Although the number of components differ from model to model, many share common terms and outline similar ordered, yet overlapping and non-exclusive, stages leading to a condition of recovery from grief marked by restructuring or re-establishment of the griever's psychosocial well-being.

Main contributors to "stage and phase" models of grieving include: Parkes (1965, 1970), Bowlby (1961, 1980), Gorer (1965), Kavanaugh (1974), and Kubler-Ross (1969) (See Appendix B).

Early Development Theory. Major developmental theorists, Freud (1916 - 17), Piaget (1960), and Erikson (1950), each provide outlines of childhood growth, accounting for development of attitudes toward life and death (see DeSpelder & Strickland, 1983). Numerous early studies provide findings related to children's concepts of death (Alexander & Alderstein, 1958; Anthony, 1940; Gesell, 1946; Nagy, 1948; Schilder & Wechsler, 1934), research that is continually being refined (Kasterbaum, 1974).

Death Anxiety. Another major area of research has focused on man's fear of death as a principle influence in his existence (Becker, 1973). That fear, as Schulz (1979) outlines, is based on a variety of physical and psychological components, which studies have endeavoured to measure and identify in terms of its positive and negative effects (Boyar, 1964; Templer, 1979).

Anticipatory Grief. As Siegel and Weinstein (1983) outline, the term anticipatory grief "describes a process in which an individual confronted with impending loss initiates the grieving process in anticipation of that event" (p. 61). According to the authors, where there has been much discussion on the concept in professional literature, little empirical study has been undertaken. Following Lindemann's introduction of the term in 1944, the concept of anticipatory grief has received wide acceptance as a healthy adaptive response lessening the degree of grief reaction after the actual death. Results of research, however, have been inconsistent and controversial (Rando, 1986). Maddison and Walker (1976) established no connection between a widow's opportunity to anticipate her husband's death and her condition of health 13 months after bereavement. Clayton and his colleagues (1973) found widows who had experienced anticipatory grief showed more depressive symptoms during the first month of bereavement and were not in significantly better health after one year than widows without such preparation. Additionally, no significant differences were noted between spouses of patients whose terminal illness had lasted six months or less and the spouses of patients whose illness had lasted longer. Gerber, Rusalem, Hannon, Battin, and Arkin (1975), Schwab, Chalmers, Conroy, Ferris and Markush (1975), and Dessonville (1982), similarly came up with results either inconsistent or unsupportive of anticipatory grief having positive adaptive value.

Findings to the contrary, however, co-exist. Friedman, Chodoff, Mason, and Hamburg (1963), in studying 46 parents who anticipated the death of a child to cancer considered those parents who did not demonstrate anticipatory grief to have longer and more intense grief reactions after the child's death. Natterson and Knudson (1960) also found that mothers who had at least four months to make ready for their child's death dealt with the death with more calmness than those mothers with less time to prepare. In other studies, Glick, Weiss, and Parkes (1974), and Parkes (1975), found that those with little warning of a spouse's death experienced greater shock or disorganization following the death, but did not differ significantly from others in subsequent grief reaction. Ball (1977), and Vachon, Rogers, Lyall, Lancee, Sheldon, and Freeman (1982), offered findings which supported a relationship between mode of death and grief reaction (greater distress when death was sudden), however, Vachon and her associates were unable to show evidence of the reverse (ie. the longer the illness, the lower the subsequent distress of the survivor).

Siegel and Weinstein (1983), however, point out that although research is inconsistent, the presumed value of anticipatory grief need not be dismissed. The authors cite the explanations of various researchers (Aldrich, 1974; Arkin, 1974; Davidson, 1975; Fulton & Fulton, 1971; Gerber et al., 1975) concerning ambivalent or guilt feelings which may arise in survivors and which could account for the inconsistency of findings. Such ambivalent feelings, for example, may relate to having maintained a "death watch" over the ill, concentrated on financial burdens incurred, withdrawn emotionally from the dying, or not having had their emotional investment in the dying effect any change in the inevitability of death. In noting that past research suffers from untested assumptions and methodological weaknesses, Siegel and Weinstein call for greater empirical investigation and clinical specification in order to redress, among other issues, the lack of attention to the sociological dimensions of anticipatory grief, concentration upon a psychological conceptualization which narrowly views grief as a paradigm of reactive depression, and a failure to offer more precise classificatory criteria (p. 70).

By way of responding to Siegel and Weinstein's appeal, Rando's recent publication, Loss and Anticipatory Grief (1986), directly addresses the concern of what anticipatory grief is and what it is not. Rando challenges assumptions that anticipatory grief is merely conventional, or post death, grief begun sooner, and questions whether anticipatory grief is present simply because a "warning or terminal illness diagnosis has been given or a sufficient length of time has elapsed from onset of illness until actual death" (p. 8). Rather, Rando contends that anticipatory grief is an "active psychological process" (p. 10) which may either be apparent or taking place on an unconscious level, and offers the following definition:

> Anticipatory grief is the phenomenon encompassing the mourning, coping, interaction, planning, and psychosocial reorganization that are stimulated and begun in part in response to the awareness of the impending loss of a loved one and the recognition of associated losses in the past, present and future. (p. 24)

Hypothesizing that anticipatory grief "mandates a delicate balance among the mutually conflicting demands of simultaneously holding onto, letting go of, and drawing closer to the dying patient" (p. 24), Rando proposes a descriptive multidimensional outline of component processes of anticipatory grief.

Rando's Model of Anticipatory Grief. Rando (1986) offers the only comprehensive model of anticipatory grief. The model delineates both the major processes and their component parts which are engaged in by individuals and families anticipating the loss of a dying patient (See Appendix A). Rando describes anticipatory grief as having two perspectives, that of the dying patient and that of others emotionally involved with the dying person, which operate within three time foci, past, present and future. She describes three classes of variables, psychological factors, social factors, and physiological factors, having influence upon three interrelated processes of anticipatory grief: individual intrapsychic processes, interactional processes with the dying patient, and familial and social processes, and further divides the main processes into sub-processes. Based in part on the writings of several researchers, Rando's detail of numerous component processes represents an outline of that which ideally takes place in anticipatory grief.

By way of illustrating Rando's extensive grouping of component processes, a selective and shortened listing here follows under Rando's designated main and sub-process headings. It is important to note that Rando describes the following processes as overlapping and not exclusive from one another, and that full justice to Rando's detailed work would only be served by a complete listing of her proposed processes. The following selections, however, have been made on the basis of their close relationship to the present study:

I. Individual Intrapsychic Processes

Awareness and gradual accommodation to the threat.

- developing deepening awareness of seriousness of the illness and implications...
- gradually absorbing and coming to terms with the reality of the impending loss over time...

Affective Processes

- mourning past, present and future losses...
- experiencing and coping with separation anxiety...
- recognizing one's separateness from the dying person...

Cognitive Processes

- starting to slowly incorporate changes in one's identity, roles, experiences, assumptions and assumptions...
- reviewing the past and attending carefully to the present in order to crystallize memories to keep after the death...
- contemplating one's own death...
- developing a philosophy about how to cope with the patient's remaining time...

Planning for the Future

- considering what the future will be like without the loved one...
- anticipating and planning for future losses and changes...
- anticipating and planning for practical and social considerations...

II. Interactional Process with the Dying Patient

Directing Attention, Energy, and Behavior toward the Dying Patient

Resolution of Personal Relationship with the Dying Patient

- finishing unfinished business...
- recollecting the mutual relationship...
- ...saying goodbye...

Helping the Dying Patient

- acting to minimize the psychological, social and physical suffering of the patient...

III. Familial and Social Processes

- making plans with other survivors-to-be for what will happen later in the illness and after the death...
- networking with other people, institutions and organizations to secure the best services and provide the patient the optimum treatment and quality of life possible. (pp.29-34)

Rando, in addition, makes two important points regarding the nature and process of anticipatory grief. First, she broadens the directional focus of anticipatory grief by emphasizing that "anticipatory grief is not solely relegated to the loss that has yet to occur, that is, the actual death..." but rather "...encompasses grief for losses that have already befallen or are currently being experienced" (p.12-13). Secondly, Rando challenges the view that anticipatory grief always involves a "...decathexis from the dying individual" (p.13). Pointing to the work of Futterman, Hoffman, and Sabshin (1972), she contends that anticipatory grieving need not occasion giving up present involvement, of any kind, with the subject(s) of grief and, in fact, may act as a motivator to greater involvement or attachment.

In all, the contribution of Rando in the area of anticipatory grief and to the general literature on death and bereavement is substantial. Although her model could benefit from the development of a strong theoretical base, clearer delineation of movement between defined processes, and further verification across differing samples of individuals and groups, Rando's description of key processes and components of anticipatory grieving provides a valuable framework in an area sorely lacking in such research.

Adults' Loss of a Parent. Until recently, only a handful of articles and research studies addressing the loss of a parent by adult children were to be found (Anderson, 1980; Horowitz, 1981; Malinak, Hoyt & Patterson, 1979; Schlentz, 1978) although, as Myers (1987) relates, the "loss of a parent is the single most common form of bereavement in this country" (p.5). Citing this "paucity" of literature, Moss and Moss (1983) opine that the lack of research may be the result of an absence of social sanction for adults to engage in prolonged or overt grief over the loss of their parents, as well as the sensitivity the study area itself holds for researchers. This last point is supported in Kaustenbuam and Aisenberg's (1972) reflection that the subject of death tends to remove differences between professionals and others.

Continuing the popular nature of research in the area, two recent publications, Myers' (1987) When Parents Die, and Donnelly's (1987) Recovering from the Loss of a Parent, provide, from case-history descriptions, themes and issues, as well as resource information (books, support services), pertinent to adults having lost their parents.

In her work, Donnelly charts the emotional response of adults to the loss of their parents, identifying phases of grief similar to those outlined by various theorists of the grieving process (see Appendix B). Additionally, she guages the effects of loss upon family relationships, and social interactions among friends as well as with those at the workplace. A main focus of Donnelly's work, however, is the issue of support - when it is needed, how can it be sought and given, and where it can be found. To that end, Donnelly outlines a "role model for bereavement support programs" in order to optimize the effectiveness of such services in assisting adult children overcome grief related to the loss of their parents.

Myers, on the other hand, endeavors to delineate particular issues of grieving related to gender and age in adulthood. In keeping with the view of other researchers, Myers holds that, while highly individual in nature, the process of grieving "has a certain order to it, [and] it progresses through what are actually overlapping, fluid phases" (p.29). Myer's effort to specify issues and challenges shared by adult males (sons) and females (daughters) of various ages, offers a worthwhile developmental perspective to the adult grieving process, yet requires further research evidence beyond the response to questionnaires and comments of helping professionals from which it was obtained.

Finally, Kowalski (1986) combines notions of anticipatory grief with the topic of parental loss to examine the subject of "anticipating the death of an elderly parent". Expressing themes rather than findings of empirical study, Kowalski's work points to numerous issues affecting adult children facing the "inevitable" loss of their parents. Kowalski states that where society tends to view the death of an older individual as "acceptable and timely" (p.190), such is seldom the case for the children of these individuals, no matter the parent's age or when the death occurs. She reiterates a number of themes set forth by Moss and Moss

(1983) regarding the affects of parental loss on adult children. One theme involves the possibility of ambivalent feelings related to a sense of being "orphaned", while at the same time experiencing that one is finally "coming into one's own". Other themes include losing a "buffer" between self and death, and the need to make relationship adjustments among surviving family members. Kowalski essentially moves forward the schedule for the experience of such issues or themes, especially when adults face advanced age or significant health decline in their parents, or become involved in aspects of their parent's care. Kowalski's work, however, remains on the descriptive level and, while providing a valuable set of themes related to the experience of adults anticipating the deaths of their elderly parents, it would benefit from broader study, as would the works of Donnelly (1987) and Myers (1987).

Parent-Child Relationship Literature

By the mid-1970's, Lowenthal, Thurnher and Chiriboga (1975) were describing the literature on parent-child relationships as "voluminous" (p.39), yet often focused narrowly by the particular discipline conducting research and the phase of family life under study. Research on early phases, primarily the domain of psychologists and psychoanalysts, tended to concentrate upon the parents' effect on various aspects of the child's physical, cognitive, emotional and social development. By contrast, study of the later phases, examined by social gerontologists, looked to the effect of the child upon the morale and health of the elderly parents. The authors noted that with the exception of a few studies, like the work of Pressey and Kuhlen (1957), and their own current research, little focus had been given to changes in the parent-child relationship over the life-span.

During the ensuing 14 years, there has remained a focus both on the effect of parents upon their young and adolescent children, as well as the influence of children upon the care and well-being of their aged parents. A selection of recent studies show that research has continued to concentrate on such aspects as parent-infant bonding (Goldberg, 1984), childhood development as influenced both by parental involvement (Amato & Ochiltree, 1986; Freeman, 1985; Wolfendale, 1985) and the child's perception of parents (Aquilino, 1986; Kawash, Kerr & Clewes, 1985; Wadkar, Gore & Palsane, 1986), and upon parent-adolescent relationships (Cohen, Alder, Beck & Irwin, 1986; Ellis-Schwabbe & Thornburg, 1986). Additionally, a variety of special-focus areas including the effects of divorce upon children and their parents (Addington, 1985-86; Wilner, 1985), the role of fathers (Hanson & Bozett, 1985-86), parents and handicapped children (Mink & Nihira, 1987), and the effects of infant daycare (Gamble & Zigler, 1986), have emerged as important study areas related to change within society and the family.

Research of the later phases also evidenced by a selection of recent studies, still gives considerable focus to aspects of parent care (Brody, 1985; Dobson & Dobson, 1985; McCaffrey, 1985; Raff & Klemmack, 1986), and living arrangements (Berman, 1987; Cicirelli, 1983; Lund, 1985). Other contemporary topics, however, have received attention, most notably current empirical and theoretical studies of "adult children of alcoholics" or "adult survivors" of dysfunctional families (Black, 1982; Middleton-Moz & Dwinell, 1986; Potter-Efran, 1987, Woititz, 1983).

As Knipscheer (1984) outlines, the relationship between parents and their adult children has tended to focus on elderly parents with middle-aged children, and has developed in the following manner:

- structural change in nuclear and extended family (Parsons, 1943)
- survival of the extended family (Sussman, 1959; 1965; Litwok, 1965)
- children's role in helping elderly parents (Shanas et al., 1968; Rosenmayr & Köckeir, 1965; Rosenmayr, 1973)
- intergenerational relationships, generation gaps, and family solidarity

> (Bengtson et al., 1976; Troll & Bengtson, 1979)
> quality of parent-child relationships and its contribution to parental well-being (Kerckhoff, 1966, Rosow, 1967; Wood & Robertson, 1978) (p.90).

In a later article, Knipscheer and Bevers, (1985) point out that recent research has made effort to examine the general interaction between older parents and their adult children. For example, the work of Bengtson, Mangen, and Landry (1984) puts forward the concept of "solidarity" to describe cohesiveness in the relationship between older parents and their adult children. Burr, Leigh, Day, and Constantine (1979) propose several variables as relating to intergenerational "satisfaction", and Bengtson and Kuypers (1971) offer a "developmental stake theory" which attempts to account for the degree of interest either party maintains in the relationship. On this latter point, Knipscheer suggests that some research indicates older parents have greater "stake" in the relationship with their children, for such reasons as a lessening of relations between parents and people of their own age group, as well as increased functional dependency upon their children. However, more study is needed in this area.

Current studies reflect a growing emphasis upon developmental aspects of the parent-child relationship as they pertain both to the relationship itself and to the individuals involved. Current studies examining issues particular to adult children with the parent-child relationship, such as role strain (Scharlach, 1987), and desire for individuation, autonomy and mutuality (Frank, Avery & Laman, 1988; White, Speisman & Costos, 1983), demonstrate the increasing focus being given developmental concerns specific to adult children in their continuing relationship with their parents. In this regard, it is to be noted that where the parent-child relationship has received considerable study, even as applied to the relationship between elderly parents and their adult children (extensively reviewed in: Garms-Homolová, Hoerning & Schaeffer, 1984), little attention has been given to concerns of the adult child, except in functional or behavioral terms, within that relationship. Not until 1984 does the heading Adult Offspring occur in the Psychological Abstracts providing recognition of issues to that population. As Moss, Moss and Moles (1985) outline, however, there is developing increased recognition in the study of parent-child relationships, that "The saliency of parents for children persists throughout their relationship .... [and] children and parents are important to each other throughout the life span" (p.134). This importance exists even though, as Cicirelli (1981) and Edinberg (1987 remark, adult children may, and often do, experience considerable ambivalence and changing attitude toward that relationship in the course of its development.

Although literature on the parent-child relationship is "voluminous", research on the relationship between (elderly) parents and their adult children has primarily, focused on "behavioral" rather than "quality" aspects of the relationship: "Until now the research in the elderly-offspring relationship focused on the behavioral level. The need for research in the quality of this relationship is often stressed but did not get systematic attention" (Knipscheer, 1984, p.96). Developmental issues, particularly those concerning feeling and attitude on the part of adults toward their relationships with their parents remains relatively unexamined.

Adult Development and Aging Literature

Background. Identifying background research in the area of adult development and aging is somewhat confused by the interchangeable use of the terms "adult development", "aging" and, more recently, "life-span development". Birren, Cunningham, and Yamamoto (1983), in their review of research on adult development and aging, cite seven previous reviews (Baltes, Reese & Lipsitt, 1980; Botwinick, 1970; Birren, 1960; Chown & Heron, 1965; Lorge, 1956; Schaie & Gribbin, 1975;

Shock, 1951) appearing in the Annual Review of Psychology as dealing with the same topic. Honzik (1984), however, correctly refers to her review of the life-span development literature as the second in the same journal following the work of Baltes et al. (1980). A more current review, Datan, Rodeheaver and Hughes (1987), again returns to the title, "Adult Development and Aging", citing itself as the "third" review following Baltes et al. (1980) and Honzik (1984). As Baltes et al. (1980) outline, life-span developmental psychology constitutes not so much a theory as a focus on behavior and development from conception to death, with attention given to the adult years and aging, areas largely neglected by developmental psychologists who considered development as ending with the "somatic growth" of infancy, childhood, and adolescence (Honsik, 1984, p.309).

Interest in the adult and later adult years has greatly expanded in recent years (Knox, 1977; Rogers, 1984; Schaie and Geiwitz, 1982) and stems from a variety of sources. Scanlon (1979) and Notman (1980) both rate changing societal views which frame adulthood in positive terms of growth and potential as opposed to maintenance and decline. Rogers (1982) identifies the influence of longitudinal studies involving children and adolescents who are followed to their adult years. As well, interest in adulthood reflects the greater numbers of adults in an aging population who, generally, are more affluent and have smaller families. This affluence has created conditions, beyond the "sheer business of survival and childbearing" (p.5) that are more conducive to considering their own "personhood" (p.6). Regardless of the particular historical nexus of developmental and life-span research, extensively discussed in the aforementioned reviews, or the sources of interest in the adult and later adult years, as Rogers (1982) details, the study of adulthood is only recent in coming:

> Only recently has adulthood begun to come into its own. Children were studied in the seventeenth century, adolescents in the early twentieth century, and the aged a few decades later. In the wake of the Industrial Revolution, a variety of writers, social reformers, medical personnel, and psychologists focused on the physical and mental limitations of later years. However, not until the 1940's was gerontology, the study of the elderly, recognized as a new field; and only about mid-century did social scientists decide that old age was a significant problem. It was later still, in the 1970's, when the first real interest was shown in the early and middle adult years. Even in 1968 there was no article on adulthood in the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (Jordan 1976), and as recently as 1975

> Brim and Abeles labelled the middle years as "a largely unexplored phase of the human cycle" (Barnett & Barush, 1978). (p.3)

The major reviews referred to earlier provide extensive references to research in key areas of empirical study, most notably: intellectual abilities, learning and memory, psychophysiology, motivation, activity and exploration, sexuality and personality. The emphasis of this discussion, however, is toward concepts and theory in adult development as they relate to and inform the present research.

Early Theorists. Colarusso and Nemiroff (1981) and Rogers (1982) both give outlines of the basic contributions of early developmental theorists to the understanding of adult development and aging. Freud is cited for offering "the first modern, systematic theory of personality development .... [as well as the concept of] maturational emergence (Colarusso & Nemiroff, 1981, p.21). Jung (1960) is acknowledged for his identification of "psychic reorganization" (Rogers, 1982, p.16) during the adult years in preparing for death, Hall (1922) for his theory of recapitulation describing development in terms of "progressively higher levels of developmental function" (Rogers, 1982, p.16) and Erikson (1959) for his 8-stage theory of development involving specific tasks extending into the adult years. Limitations of these works, however, are also noted by the authors. Freud tended to limit the concept of adulthood by characterizing its aim as achieving "maturity", or the ability to work and love. Hall, on the other hand, offered a rather fatalistic view of decline in the adult years, while Erikson based his elaborate model of development upon a small sample of males, with question arising as to its application to women. The importance of these pioneering works, nevertheless, is well-established.

Current Adult Developmentalists. While a number of contemporary theorists are making significant contributions to the study of adult development including Havighurst (1972) for his outline of developmental "tasks", Lowenthal, Thurnher & Chiriboga (1975) for their depiction of four life strategies, and both Peck (1968) and Vaillant (1977) for their expansions of several of Erikson's stages, the works of three 4researchers have been selected as having particular significance to the present research.

Levinson's Theory. As outlined in his 1978 publication, The Seasons of a Man's Life, Levinson views adult development in terms of an individual's evolving "life structure" which follows as "relatively, orderly sequence... of alternating stable (structure-building) periods and transitional (structure-changing) periods" (p.49), forming the direction of adult psychosocial development between self and the world. Primarily focusing on an individual's relationship with the outside world, Levinson divides the life cycles into overlapping eras approximately 20 years in length and containing certain developmental tasks for each period of transition. Although there are age-specific transitions at the 30 and 50-year marks, the most critical transition periods occur at early adulthood (17-22 year old period), mid-life (40-45 year old period) and late adulthood (60-65 year old period). It is at these critical points that the basic structure of the ensuing period is formed as one of "renewal or stagnation".

In his depiction of adult development, Levinson addresses the adult/child-parent relationship, particularly during the period of early adult transition. Levinson states the need of the young adult to "remove the family from the center of his life and begin a process of change that will lead to a new home base for living as a young adult in an adult world" (Levinson, 1978, p.75), as a task toward autonomy and independence. Levinson, however, notes that separating self from parents as an adult is not merely a physical task but also a "psychosocial" undertaking involving cognitive and emotional elements as well. He cites men in his research as having broadly different relationships with their parents, and proposes that separation from parents takes place over the entire life span, often characterized by "ambivalent attachment to family" (p.75). In spite of being based solely upon the experience of male subjects, and concentrating essentially upon changes outside, as opposed to within the person, Levinson's work offers the furthest ranging modern clinical research in adult development.

Gould's Theory. The work of Roger Gould is significant if only due to his bringing a psychoanalytic perspective to adult development theory, a view, as Mann (1985) notes, all too "fragmentary" or absent in this area of research. In his 1978 publication, Transformations: Growth and Change in Adult Life, Gould proposes that adult consciousness is gained through the understanding and transcendence of the childhood consciousness which contains "protective devices" safeguarding against the achievement of self-definition and self-responsibility. Major among the "protective devices" employed by the child consciousness are numerous false assumptions. According to Gould, most of these assumptions are cognitively dismissed before an individual reaches young adulthood, however, many continue to play an unconscious role in adult life. The meeting and overcoming of major and sub-assumptions in each of four chronological eras provide the developmental tasks and conflicts facing adults.

Setting forth theory which gives greater emphasis to an internal psychological process occurring during adulthood, Gould's work looks by this to address an additional realm of adult development.

Neugarten's Theory. As Colarusso and Nemiroff (1981) note, Neugarten and her associates (1975) have made substantial contribution to research on adult development by conducting numerous studies on a variety of related topics including "personality development, adaptational patterns, career lines, age norms, age-appropriate behavior in adults, and on attitudes and values across generational lines" (p.50). Derived from extensive interviewing of men and women aged 45 - 55, dominant issues related to middle adulthood and, in degree, to younger or older people, have emerged from Neugarten's work, as Colarusso and Nemiroff (1981) outline:

(a) Middle-aged adults look to themselves as the instrument through which to achieve a form of "self-utilization".

(b) Because of an increased sense of physical vulnerability, protective strategies are devised to maintain the body - a form of "body-monitoring".

(c) Increasingly, time is viewed in terms of time-left-to-live rather than time since birth.

(d) Death becomes personalized, applying to loved ones and particularly to oneself.

(e) A new perspective and increased self-understanding comes from being a part of the middle generation, in a position to observe both the younger and older generations objectively.

(f) Because of realized expertise, ongoing accomplishment is felt to be appropriate and expected.

(g) Taking stock, reflecting, structuring and re-structuring experience, indeed, all aspects of introspection take on an increased importance. (p.50-51)

In addition to identifying the preceding issues which provide a valuable set of perspectives as seen from middle-age and, by extension other periods of adulthood, Neugarten also challenges the concept of "crisis" as a pervasive condition of adulthood. She argues that few adults actually suffer what is termed "mid-life crisis", unless resulting from "some interruption in the rhythm of adult development" (Sanstrock, 1986).

The works of these three writers, among others, represent efforts to establish and further theoretical and conceptual frameworks for the study of adult development. As Levinson (1986) has recently remarked, "the study of adult development is, one might say, in its infancy" (p.3). Levinson (in press) himself, for example, with work being currently published is broadening his research to include the experiences of women, a population other researchers have already attempted to relate to Levinson's work (Roberts & Newton, 1987), and who have been noted for their absence in the studies by Levinson, as well as the work of Erikson (Rogers, 1982). Additionally, Levinson is moving to expand and strengthen his model of developmental periods and structural life cycle, the principles of which, as with most development research including study of adulthood, find their basis in stage theory.

Stage Theory: Tenets and Criticism. As various writers describe (Ambron, 1978; Rogers, 1982; Sanstrock, 1986), while allowing for individual differences, stage theory involves the concept that life occurs in sequential phases or periods of growth and maturation. Although not rigidly fixed to chronological schedules, these stages take place within age-related time-frames, hierarchically ordered and including facets of cognitive, emotional, behavioral and social development.

Although the fundamental concept of stage theory is widely accepted, numerous criticisms exist. Foremost among these are the difficulties involved in marking discernible periods of development and points of transition between them. In this regard, differences exist over which measurements, whether chronological, age, personality development, individual or social tasks, or otherwise to employ when assessing various stages of growth. Other criticisms involve whether to distribute equal emphasis along the development line, and what importance to place upon environmental and sociological factors in order to account for an individual, or groups of individuals changing within a changing society or culture (Bengtson & Starr, 1975).

In order to address these kinds of criticisms, establish an analytical basis for comparing various approaches to adult development, and consider the present state of research in this field, Levinson (1986) proposes a series of issue-related questions which effectively provide a framework for further research in adult development:

1. What are the alternative ways of defining a structural stage or period?
2. What relative emphasis is given to the structures and structure-building periods or stages, as compared to the transitional, structure-changing periods?
3. How can we make best use of the distinction between hierarchical levels and seasons of development?
4. Are there age-linked developmental periods in adulthood?
5. What are the relative merits and limitations of various research methods?

6. How can we bring together the developmental perspective and the socialization perspective? (p.9)

MAJOR DATA FINDINGS IN CONTEXT OF THE LITERATURE

Triggers and Reconciliation

Triggers. The identification of "triggers" (developmental changes and/or crises) as precipitating and influencing factors in the process of adults' anticipation of the loss of their parents, is supported by descriptions in the human development/life-span literature which note the vital role of such concepts as "change", "maturation" and "experience" as influences upon the process by which our lives are shaped and lived. In this regard, Sanstrock (1986) outlines a distinction between normative factors, or those common developmental changes related to time since birth, and non-normative factors which occur to fewer numbers of individuals and more by chance. Employing similar concepts, Pollock (1987) cites the influences of "precipitating" or "onset" events in our development and experience. He terms as "normative crises or transition" those "normal developmental progressions as related to internal (biologic and psychological factors) and external events such as birth, rites of initiation, puberty, marriage, having a child, naming, menopuase, retirement and death (which are) accompanied by separations, differentions, changes, losses ..." (p. 349). Equally impactful for Pollock are such "catastrophic crises", as "premature or violent death, serious illness, divorce, other forms of abandonment, rape, natural disaster, war (or) incarceration" which, he posits, may "trigger" strain and such emotional responses as anxiety, anger, fear or grief. Pine (1986) likewise comments that "grief potential" may be activated once "...the anticipation of a particular bereavement elicits and triggers various grief reactions" (p. 40). In Pine's view, anticipation of loss may be further affected by past or present losses, such as near-fatal or serious illnesses, which affect our awareness and consciousness of death. Pine further holds that "all one's grief reactions are linked together throughout one's existence" (p. 51), and present losses or critical changes may elicit re-experiencing previous losses as well as promoting contemplation of those of future date. Findings of the present study indicated that consideration of developmental (_expected_) changes and/or life-crises (_unexpected_ changes) played a vital precipatory role for adults anticipating the loss of their parents.

Reconciliation. The concept of becoming reconciled, or "reconciling" oneself, discovered in the present research to be the _Basic Social Process_ employed by the adults "facing inevitable loss" bears close relation to concepts and notions set forth in the three major literatures reviewed in this chapter: Death and Bereavement, Parent-Child Relationships, and Adult Development.

Although there continues to be much interest and debate in the Death and Bereavement literature around description and measurement of the grieving process, general consensus exists among researchers that the greiving process assumes a broadly ordered direction which, in cases of "normal" grief, eventually results in forms of social and psychological adaptation to, recovery from, or acceptance of loss (Demi & Miles, 1987; Middleton & Raphael, 1987). While a sampling of the literature did not show "reconciling" identified or labelled as a recovering process during the grieving period, companion terms and notions were evident. Included in descriptions of "normal", "healthy", or "uncomplicated" grieving were concepts of "coming to terms with", becoming "resolved" to, and "accepting" the loss as part of a highly individual, challenging and ongoing process (Bowlby, 1980; DeSpelder & Strickland, 1983; Kubler-Ross, 1969; Parkes, 1972). Within this recovering process, individuals engage in numerous intrapsychic and interpersonal task activities in order to cope with, resolve and accept the loss (Worden, 1982). In the present research, individuals were discovered to engage in various strategies as they endeavored to "reconcile" themselves to the anticipation of inevitable loss.

Within the Parent-Child Relationship literature, there exists a consistent theme of the challenge inherent in intergenerational relations to "negotiate", sort out, and otherwise resolve aspects of the parent-child relationship (Datan, Greene & Reese, 1986). Kowalski (1986), in speaking both to aspects of the parent-child relationship and issues related to anticipation of loss, describes the need of adult children to "reconcile" their often paradoxical and ambivalent feelings toward the prospect of their elderly parents' deaths.

Finally, literature in the area of adult development outlines various tasks and challenges facing individuals as they move through phases and transitions of growth and change in their personal and interpersonal lives (Kegan, 1982; Sanstrock, 1986; Rogers, 1982). Key among these descriptions, and those of other more philosophical writers (Frankl, 1963; Tournier, 1973), are concepts of adults' attempts to understand and accept both the terms of their existence and their place within it.

Findings of this study indicated that, in similar fashion, the adults undertook the three major processes, with component parts, outlined in Figure 2 in an ongoing attempt to personally "reconcile" themselves to the terms of anticipated loss and their own expected survivorship.

Although the descriptions in many studies of a "healthy" outcome to the grieving process include such aspects as relinquishing bonds with the deceased, developing a renewed, more optimistic view toward life, and forming new attachments, the adaptation process to loss is recognized as having no clear starting or finishing point and may be characterized by many activities unique to the individual involved (Raphael, 1983). In the present work, discovered strategies employed by the adults to address and "reconcile" themselves to the prospect of "facing inevitable loss" most closely related to processes and concepts contained in the theoretical model of Rando (1983) examined earlier in this chapter, while remaining highly individual to the participants in the study.

Death and Bereavement Literature. Within the general study of death and bereavement, the present research has broad relatedness to such issues as death anxiety and survivorship. Even more specifically, however, it relates to outlines of various stages and phases of grieving, current clarification and enhancement in the study of anticipatory grief, and a recent focus upon issues and experiences involved for adults in the loss of their parents. The general descriptions by writers such as Bowlby (1961, 1980), Kubler-Ross (1969), and Parkes (1965, 1970) of phases and stages of grieving, each leading to some form of recovery from, and acceptance of the loss, as well as a reorganizing or re-establishment of the griever's life, provide a framework for the model of "reconciling self to inevitable loss" discovered and explained in this research (See Figure 2). As with the descriptions of these writers, the present model depicts ordered, yet overlapping, non-exclusive stages involving eventual and ongoing reconciliation to loss.

In studying the process by which adults anticipate, or "face", the prospect of losing their parents, the present research has direct relationship to Rando's model of anticipatory grief. Like Rando's work, the present study delineates a process involving three time foci, major and component psychological processes involving affective, cognitive and behavioral aspects of grieving, and the presence of influencing variables and strategies for change. Additionally, many of the component themes and processes described by Rando were discovered to exist in the data of this study. Rando's description of processes involving awareness and gradual accommodation to the threat, resolution of personal relationship with the dying patient, and planning for the future, for instance, roughly correspond to the three major processes discovered in this study: discerning life and death, evaluating relationship with parents, and preparing to outlive. Numerous other themes and processes including, contemplating one's own death, anticipating future changes , and reviewing the past were also found in the present research. Findings of this study, then, would lend credibility and confirmation to much of Rando's model as it applies to the general process of anticipatory grief. While the specific focus of the present study centers on the perspective of the informants, the study extends Rando's work and the stage and phase descriptions previously cited. The present investigation offers a developed theoretical model based in data, and a proposed process with overlapping sequence and points of transition, which characterizes the way adults in this study resolved the problems of facing the inevitable loss of their parents.

Finally, with regard to its particular focus, the present study has strong relationship with current literature describing the significance and impact of losing or anticipating the loss of a parent upon their adult children (Donnelly, 1987; Kowalski, 1986; Moss & Moss, 1983; Myers, 1987). Although identifying many major themes and issues affecting these adults, this literature is limited by its concentration upon a relatively narrow period of time in which parents are experiencing significant decline. It also places inordinate emphasis on case history and questionnaire material for descriptive purposes, without a developed theoretical base or operational models depicting processes undertaken to resolve problematic issues. These are limitations the present study seeks to address.

Parent-Child Relationship Literature. Findings in the present study support notions that the parent-child relationship has continuing importance to adults although they may possess ambivalent or changing feelings, thought and behavior toward that relationship over time. In presenting responses of adults to their relationship with their parents, within the context of the present research topic, this study most closely relates to the relatively unexamined area of intergenerational research. This area emphasizes the quality of the parent-child relationship and, more particularly, emotions, thoughts and behaviors of the adult child beyond the mere functional aspects of the relationship. Where the present research touches upon aspects of the parent-child relationship, particularly in comments by informants pertaining to the degree of contentment and bonding they feel, or desire, with their parents, it supports notions of "solidarity" (Bengtson et al., 1984) and "satisfaction" (Burr et al., 1979) as important components of intergenerational relationships. Overall interest expressed by adults in this study regarding not only the well-being of their parents but the nature of their mutual relationship with their parents, would indicate that, for these individuals at least, their developmental "stake" in the relationship is significant, although perhaps based more on affective and cognitive rather than functional or behavioral factors. This last point, the significance and meaning parents hold for their adult children, how that affects their changing relationship and has impact upon the development of the adults themselves, constitutes a relatively recent area of study and merits continuing research.

Adult Development and Aging Literature. In the general principles and tenets of developmental stage theory outlined earlier, and the broad conceptual models offered by various developmental theorists denoting levels of adult growth with accompanying transition periods and developmental tasks, lies the general conceptual context for the present study and the developed theoretical model (See Chapter Five, Conclusions and Discussion). Specifically, the notion in developmental stage theory of general age-related development, occuring in continuous, sequential form, which allows for individual differences yet depicts shared tasks, has direct relationship to stages of social/psychological process involving change over time, described in grounded theory methodology (See Glaser, 1978, p.96f). The comparatively recent attention to the area of adult development, extending principles of necessary, meaningful and discernible change to the years of adulthood has particular significance to the present research.

Of the research cited in this section, Levinson's changing "life-structures" between self and the world, were generally supported by participants' autobiographical outline of their various associations and pursuits involving education, career, and intimate relationships including marriage and family. Data from informants, however, most closely related to Levinson's described psychosocial task for adults to separate from their families of origin. Several adults in the present study expressed their need to achieve a measure of independence and separation from their parents, both physically, cognitively (relying more on their own sense of values and judgment), and emotionally (not taking an inordinate responsibility for resolution of outstanding differences with parents). Adults of various ages in this study also described the continuing nature of such a task, as well as the continuing presence of ambivalent feelings toward parents and family cited by Levinson.

In this regard, adults in the study stated numerous opinions, notions and beliefs regarding themselves, their relationships with parents and with others. This expression of personal attitude supports Gould's notion that one aspect of adult development consists of an internal psychological process. Efforts by adults in the study to "reconcile" their thoughts and emotions toward their parents would lend credence to this process being a developmental task of adulthood.

Finally, issues identified by Neugarten as dominant for middle-aged adults were consistently present in information provided by adults in this study. Informants regularly spoke in terms of "time-left-to-live rather than time-since-birth", and personalized death as applied to self and loved ones. They offered opinions regarding aspects of younger and older ages, and engaged in processes of "taking stock", reflection and introspection as they endeavoured to come to terms with their experience. Comments by participants in this study, however, would seem to support Neugarten's issues as applying to a broader range of ages in adulthood.

Overall, results of the present study would seem to support general principles and tenets of adult stage development theory, as well as particular aspects of adult development. Most notably, tasks of separation involved in the parent-child/adult relationship, internal psychological processes of adulthood, and changing views/perspectives involved in adulthood, were contained in the research of three writers emphasized in this section.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Research Questions. In Chapter One, Statement of the Problem, three research questions were presented. Restated, these questions are:

1. How do adults in the research view the prospective loss of their parents?
2. What actions do the adults undertake in light of the anticipated loss of their parents?
3. How are these thoughts and actions integrated into a process by which adults anticipate the loss of their parents?

Overall, participants were found to maintain varied views of the prospect of losing their parents. Accordingly, informants undertook assorted and individual actions to adjust or "reconcile" themselves to that prospect. Although such actions were unique to each individual, broadly related processes shared by the adults were discovered through the research.

Results of this study indicate that "triggered" by developmental changes and/or crises, adults anticipating the loss of their parents engaged in three major processes, discerning life and death, evaluating relationship with parents, and preparing to outlive, and one basic or core process "reconciling self to inevitable loss", in an effort to address and resolve their central problem of "facing inevitable loss".

"Reconciling self" was found to be a highly individual and ongoing process, similar to descriptions of generally ordered, yet overlapping and non-exclusive stages and phases which lead to forms of acceptance, recovery, reorganization and re-establishment depicted in theoretical models of grief (see Appendix B). "Reconciling self", then, was marked by adults in the study each "coming to terms with", "making peace with" and "adjusting to" the anticipated loss of their parents, affectively, cognitively and behaviorally. They did so by discerning the nature and process of life and death, evaluating their relationships with their parents, and preparing themselves to outlive the deaths of their parents.

Discerning life and death was characterized by two components: questioning life and death, and anticipating future changes. Precipitated by developmental events and/or crises, adults in the study were given to general contemplation of the nature and process of existence and its condition of change. As described in various general and scientific writings (Enright, 1983; Schneidman, 1976) in the area of death and loss, such philosophic musing often reflects an effort to understand and establish one's place and meaning in relationship to existence and the nature of change within that condition. Consideration of matters related to life, death and change, including questions of permanence and mortality, were generally concluded by formulation of a personal attitude toward the phenomena of change, and led to more specific contemplation of anticipated future changes.

For adults in the study, consideration of future change specifically involved anticipating the aging and eventual loss of their parents as unique and valued individuals in their lives. The role and personal meaning of parents was reflected upon by the adults, as well as matters related to the form, timing and order future change might assume. For some adults, the eventual loss of their parents meant a future "void" in their life where those persons who had offered, among other things, forms of "support" and guidance, and a connection to their own upbringing and development, would be lost; for others, the eventual loss of their parents meant the gaining of independence and full "adulthood", where feelings of being restricted or "obliged" by their parents' expectations would be replaced by new feelings of autonomy and self-accountability. For most of the adults, consideration of future change and, specifically, the loss of their parents, as spoken of in the death and bereavement (Moss & Moss, 1983;

Myers, 1987), and parent-child relationship (Cicirelli, 1981; Edinberg, 1987) literatures, was marked by the presence of mixed ambivalent feelings which led to more particular evaluation of their relationships with their parents.

Adults' evaluations of their relationships with their parents consisted of three components: evaluating present/past relationships with parents, determining desired relationship with parents, and assessing future challenges to the relationship. In evaluating their present and past relationships with their parents, adults considered such aspects as their parents' characters, the nature of the parental relationship, and the quality of their personal relationships with their parents during their upbringing and in the present day. Adults demonstrated a range of feelings and thoughts, as they tended to in most areas of the research, when speaking of their relationships with their parents. For some, the relationship had generally remained one of happiness and satisfaction, while for others their memories and accounts of present interaction with parents were less pleasant. Others had witnessed, or were presently experiencing, change in their relationships with parents. Each adult, however, regardless of their particular relationship with their parents expressed a view of parents as having special significance and a unique role in their lives, a finding which supports recent literature (Moss, Moss & Moles, 1985) extending the importance of parents to their children throughout the life-span. The desire expressed by adults in the study to either continue or attempt to achieve a mutually satisfying relationship with their parents, is also indicative of their having a "developmental stake": (Bengtson & Kuypers, 1971) in the relationship, although particular aspects of this require further study.

All adults in the research cited challenges to their relationship with parents including restrictive attitudes toward discussing death and dying found in society and the family, insurmountable differences with parents, frustrations inherent in attempting to be a "good" child and meet parental expectations, and various elements related to their parents' aging. Regarding the latter, although some adults viewed their parents' aging as an opportunity to "give back" a measure of the care they had received over the years, concerns about parental aging were also evident. Some participants expressed worry over the prospect of an awkward "reversal" of roles with parents, increased involvement in their parents' care, and possible difficulty in effectively communicating with their parents given significant decline in their parents' health. In all, these findings supported accounts in literature (Brody, 1985; Cicirelli, 1981) pertaining to care of the elderly, and mixed feelings from the perspective of children. Such ambivalent feelings, coupled with recognition of the inevitability of losing their parents, results in adults engaging in a process of preparing to outlive their parents' deaths.

Preparing to outlive their parents' deaths included two components for adults in the study: assessing personal resilience, and securing the future. In assessing their personal resilience to change and loss, adults "took stock" of their present and expected abilities to meet and live past such changes. This process, for many, included reviewing their past experiences with crises and/or developmental change. Such review involved assessing the impact of those events upon themselves, and the resources they had developed, both within themselves and in conjunction with others, as a result of those experiences. On the basis of their personal assessment as to their ability to rebound and "survive" the future loss of their parents, the adults employed various measures, again both within and outside themselves in an effort to "secure" or create the best outcome to that anticipated loss. In this regard, adults undertook variously to increase contact with their parents, engage in shared experiences in order to build present and future memories, and endeavored to develop better understanding and empathy toward their parents, in part to reduce prospects of future guilt or remorse at having missed, or neglected developing, opportunities for a significant relationship with their parents. Finally, some adults commented on mental preparations they are undertaking in order to reconcile themselves to their anticipated "aloneness" following their parents' deaths, and responsibilities they view as incumbent upon themselves as adults in society. In all, efforts taken by the adults to prepare to outlive their parents deaths, largely conform to general tasks of adult development contained in major theoretical perspectives (Erikson, 1959; Levinson, 1978; Neugarten, 1975) in the area. Taking measures of personal resources and abilities, while acting to optimally develop the future reflect endeavors to "mature" and "individuate" both within the parent-child relationship and in the context of general development.

Overall, findings of the study support general research outlining adults' efforts to determine meaning and purpose in the processes of life and death, their relationship with parents, and the context of their adult development, while specific findings relate to various components and themes of anticipatory grief and the impact of parental loss upon adults (Moss & Moss, 1983; Rando, 1986). Expanding upon this previous work, findings of the present study resulted in the generation of a theoretical model depicting a process whereby adults in the research attempt to "reconcile" themselves to the prospect of losing their parents.

A Model: Reconciling Self to Inevitable Loss

Findings of the study were consolidated into a proposed model (see Figure 2) outlining major processes, with component parts, undertaken by adults in the research to "reconcile" themselves to the inevitable loss of their parents. This process is viewed as ongoing and ordered (that is, having general direction), yet possessing overlapping stages marked by points of transition over time, consistent with goals of the constant comparative method and principles for identifying and describing a basic social psychological process (BSPP) (see Glaser, 1978). The model looks to describe the basic core process employed by adults in the study to address and resolve the issue of "facing inevitable loss" in the form of their parents' anticipated deaths, and consists of "triggering" or precipitating factors, as well as three major process containing a total of seven component parts.

Hypotheses

As outlined in Chapter Two, Methodology, theory emerges from "an integrated set of hypotheses" (Glaser, 1978, p. 134) which serve to suggest relationships in the data and act as guides to further research. Hypotheses or propositions generated from this research are:

1. Adults who are not presently affected by "triggering" factors (developmental change and/or crises), will not engage in a process of anticipating the loss of their parents.
2. Adults who engage in a process of anticipating the loss of their parents will attempt to "reconcile" themselves to the prospect of inevitable loss by first discerning matters related to life/death, followed by evaluating their relationship with their parents and, finally, preparing themselves to outlive the loss.
3. Adults who have developed a personally satisfying attitude to the meaning and process of life and death, including their parents and their own mortality, will be more reconciled to the prospect of future change and loss.
4. The more reconciled adults are to past experiences in their lives involving developmental change and/or crisis, the more reconciled they will be to future change or crisis.
5. The more adults feel able to openly express and discuss their feelings with regard to matters of death and loss, both within society and their families, the more reconciled they will be in anticipating the loss of their parents.

6. The more outstanding differences are resolved between adults and their parents, the more reconciled adults will be to their parents' anticipated deaths.

7. Adults who have achieved less personal autonomy and individualization from their parents, will be less reconciled to the anticipated loss of their parents.

8. Adults who assess that they possess personal resources within themselves and/or in conjunction with others, will be better prepared for, and more reconciled to, the eventual loss of their parents.

9. The more adults feel they applied effort to care for and reach mutual understanding with their parents in terms of their relationship, the more reconciled they will be to anticipating the loss of their parents.

10. Adults who have taken active measures to optimize a desired future for themselves, and loved ones, will be more reconciled to the prospect of losing their parents.

11. Adults who view death as containing "positive" elements for self and others will be more reconciled to the anticipated loss of their parents.

12. Adults who anticipate satisfying future interaction with siblings, family members and others following the loss of parents, will be more reconciled to the anticipated loss.

13. Adults who desire a positive relationship with their parents and are presently affected by developmental

change and/or crisis, will more likely "invest" or move closer emotionally to that relationship.

14. Adults who do not desire a positive relationship with their parents and are presently affected by developmental change and/or crisis, will more likely "divest" or emotionally distance themselves from that relationship.
15. Adults who desire a positive relationship with their parents and are not being affected by developmental change and/or crisis will likely maintain the present terms of that relationship.
16. Adults who do not desire a positive relationship with their parents and are not being affected by developmental change and/or crisis, will likely remain emotionally "distanced" from that relationship.

The last four hypotheses are represented in a matrix outlining the relationship between "triggers", discussed earlier in this paper, and adults desired relationship with their parents (see Figure 3).

Strengths and Limitations of the Research

Method. The present study possesses both strength and limitation in the nature and level of its research method. Grounded theory methodology makes a valuable contribution in providing generated theory "grounded" in data, which may serve

		DESIRED RELATIONSHIP WITH PARENTS	
		+	-
TRIGGERS	+	INVEST	DIVEST
	-	MAINTAIN	DISTANCE

Fig. 3 Hypothesized Relationship Between Major Factors Involved in BSPP

as a basis for further research. However, the level to which the methodology is undertaken has bearing upon the applicability and generalizability of the results. As outlined in Chapter Two, Methodology, grounded theory allows for various levels of study, producing forms of "substantive" or "formal" theory. In developing "substantive" theory, results of the present study are limited to the "reality" of the research participants alone. While verification of the findings is ensured by use of the constant comparative method within the study, additional verification of the research is left to further study.

Further limitation of the research may be viewed in its not being an extended or "longitudinal" study. Interviewing of same informants on separate occasions over the approximate 7[illegible] month period of the investigation, however, lent a "longitudinal" quality to the research.

Sample. Grounded theory methodology requires that data be collected until new information is no longer forthcoming. Selective theoretical sampling complements this process by enlarging the diversity of informants, thus broadening and strengthening the developing theory. Determining adequate sample size, then, rests upon the judgment of the researcher and may be questioned if not sufficiently met, in terms of data collected and sources from which it came. With six informants, the present study represents an average-sized sample for this method of research. Application of the constant comparative method resulted in the determination that categories had been "saturated". A final, or absolute, determination of this kind, however, remains problematic.

Availability of subjects led, in the present study, to informants who were either pursuing or had obtained university educations. Although a number of secondary informants possessed other levels of education, the similarity of education in principal informants may have acted as a narrowing feature in the sample. Additionally, each principal informant, through ~~his~~/her education focus or current work experience was involved in some aspect of a "helping" profession, and thus perhaps more disposed to considering matters related to human development and interpersonal relationship than would members of the general population. While sampling of secondary informants and research literature supported data from the principal informants, and confirmed discovered "processes" in the primary data, this particular similarity of the principle subjects is worth noting as a potentially limiting feature. Of possible interest to those conducting future investigation in this topic area, was the absence in the sample of a "eldest" child with respect to sibling age ranking. The experiences and perspectives of such individuals may provide a valuable addition in the subject area.

Researcher. Finally, since many aspects of the research are controlled by the selections and judgments of the researcher, his/her role must be considered as a potential limitation to the research. In this regard, it is incumbent upon the analyst to assess his/her biases which may affect choices in the research. The keeping of memos, in which personal observations and sentiments are recorded, as well as conferring with colleagues or outside persons, assists in checking this subjective involvement in the research. At the same time, it must be noted that particular qualities of creativity and discernment brought to the study project by the analyst may also be viewed as strengthening factors in the research (Hutchinson, 1986).

Implications for Education and Practice

The present study has direct implications for education, training and counselling in such areas as family life education, interpersonal relationship, and human development. As outlined in previous chapters, the research on adult development is relatively recent, and where the study of death and dying has produced an abundance of research, it still is challenged by societal "taboos" related to its subject matter (Kutscher, Carr & Kutscher, 1987). Adults spoken to in the context of the present research, both as principal and secondary informants, generally expressed a high degree of relatedness to the research topic while often commenting upon restrictions they felt within society and their homes to discuss a subject of this kind. Supported by themes expressed in literature (Donnelly, 1987; Moss & Moss, 1983; Myers, 1987), the comments of the adults reflected general attitudes that the loss of a parent, especially within the "natural" process of old age, while being the source of certain grief for their adult children was, nonetheless, a fairly expected and uneventful process of generational transition. Nowhere in the experience of adult children losing their parents was to be found the trauma or profoundness of loss of a child, a spouse, a sibling (Hogan, 1988), or a young child's loss of a parent. Recent findings, however, and results of the present research, indicate that the loss of parents holds great significance for adults, both in the event and its anticipation. Adults, when considering the future loss of their parents, may experience a range of emotional response to the subject, and endeavor to adjust or "reconcile" themselves to that expected loss by discerning the nature and process of life and death, evaluating their relationships with their parents, and preparing themselves to outlive their parents' deaths. In this regard, training, education and counselling programs may serve valuable preventative and preparatory functions by outlining identified themes, concepts and processes which "normalize" the experiences of adult children considering the future loss of their parents.

With specific regard to education, major findings of the present research have possible application to numerous areas of the humanities and social sciences. The process by which adults anticipate the loss of their parents has implications for the study of such varied topics as human/life-span development, aging, care of the elderly, family and parent-child relationships, and the entire field of thanatology as seen from individual, family and societal perspectives. Courses and training programs in the aforementioned areas might be designed to emphasize themes and issues related to adult development and the aging process, especially with concern to the adult child-parent relationship. Particularly, identification of adulthood as a period of continuing change and transition during which the adult child-parent relationship remains important, while subject to certain change and development, provides valuable theme for study and research. The significant effects of either developmental or sudden, crisis-oriented change, as they may lead to consideration of matters related to mortality and death, is another worthwhile area of study. Finally, the experienced or anticipated impact of parental aging and death upon adult children, provides educators in the field of thanatology with a broad area for research and discussion.

Since each parent-child relationship differs in some manner, however, and the grieving (and anticipatory grieving) process, while having discernible traits, is highly individual, findings of the present research may be used in conjunction with the personal experiences of individuals to assist those individuals in preparing for the eventual loss of their parents and thus help prevent, or lessen, the potentially traumatic impact of that event, as well as circumstances preceding the actual loss. With respect to this final point, although adults in the study spoke of their experiences anticipating the loss of their parents, it was within a broader context of the parent-child relationship and the particular importance it holds for them during the course of their adult lives. Research literature, and findings of the present study highlight the changing nature of the parent-child relationship with its inherent obstacles and challenges for each member. The continuing meaningfulness and significance the parent-child relationship has for adults, however, functions as an important basis for both education and practice in the family relations field, as it relates to matters of interpersonal communication and resolution of conflict.

Community counselling services might appropriately address individual, parent-child, and family-related issues of the kind identified in this section. Additional counselling programs specifically focusing on preparation for, or recovery from separation and loss may be relevant in such settings as palliative care units of hospitals, or in institutions which provide for the elderly while encouraging family involvement. Outreach health care programs might also offer similar counselling services through community-based support groups or counselling to family members in private homes or residences. Regardless of the particular setting, such counselling programs would seek to promote open and direct communication between parents and adult children, while dealing with such general issues as the nature and process of change, the parent-child relationship and aspects of survivorship.

Overall, the present research, in its discovery of themes and processes related to adults anticipating the loss of their parents, and its emphasis upon the continuing importance of parents to their adult children, provides information which may serve to assist adults (and their parents) prepare for future loss and lessen the traumatic impact such events may bring.

REFERENCES

Aldrich, C.K. (1974). Some dynamics of anticipatory grief. In B. Schoenberg et al. (Eds.), Anticipatory grief. New York: Columbia University Press

Alexander, I.E., & Alderstein, A.M. (1958). Affective responses to the concept of death in a population of children and early adolescents. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 93, 167 - 177.

Amato, P.R., & Ochiltree, G. (1986). Family resources and the development of child competence. Journal of Marriage and the Family. 48 (1), 47 - 56.

Ambron, S.R. (1978). Child development. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston.

Anderson, H. (1980). The death of a parent: Its impact on middle-aged sons and daughters. Pastoral Psychology, 23 (3), 151 - 167.

Anthony, S. (1972). The discovery of death in childhood and after. New York: Basic Books.

Arkin, A.M. (1974). Notes on anticipatory grief. In B. Schoenberg et al. (Eds.), Anticipatory grief. New York: Columbia University Press.

Ball, J.F. (1977). Widow's grief: The impact of age and mode of death. Omega, 7, 307 - 333.

Baltes, P.B., Reese, H.W., & Lipsitt, L.P. (1980). Life-span developmental psychology. Annual Review of Psychology, 31, 65 - 110.

Becker, E. (1973). The denial of death. New York: The Free Press.

Bengtson, V.L., & Kuypers, J.A. (1971). Generational differences and the developmental stake. Aging and Human Development, 2, 249 - 260.

Bengtson, V.L., Mangen, D.J., & Landry, P.H. Jr. (1984) The multi-generation family: Concepts and findings. In V. Garms-Homolova, E. Hoerning, & D. Schaeffer (Eds.), Intergenerational relationships. Toronto: Hogrefe.

Bengtson, V.L., Olander, E., & Haddad, A. (1976). The "generation gap" and aging family members: Toward a conceptual model. In J.F. Gubrium (Ed.), Time, roles and self in old age. New York: Human Sciences Press.

Bengtson, V.L. & Starr, J.M. (1975). Contrast and consensus: A generational analysis of youth in the 1970's. Youth: The 74th yearbook of national society for the study of education, part 1. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Berman, H.J. (1987). Adult children and their parents: Irredeemable obligation and irreplaceable loss. Journal of Gerontological Social Work, 10 (1-2), 21 - 34.

Bigus, O.E., Hadden, S., & Glaser, B.G., (1982). The study of basic social processes. In R.B. Smith, & P.K. Manning (Eds.), The handbook of social science methods. Volume 2: Qualitative methods. Cambridge: Ballinger.

Birren, J.E. (1960). Psychology and aspects of aging. Annual Review of Psychology, 11, 161 - 198.

Birren, J.E., Cunningham, W.R., & Yamamoto, K. (1983). Psychology of adult development and aging. Annual Review of Psychology, 34, 543 - 575.

Black, C. (1982). It will never happen to me. Denver: M.A.C. Printing.

Blumer, H. (1969). Symbolic interactionism: Perspective and method. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice - Hall.

Botwinick, J. (1970). Geropsychology. Annual Review of Psychology, 21, 239 - 272.

Bowlby, J. (1961). Processes of mourning. International Journal of Psycho-Analysis. 42, 317 - 340.

Bowlby, J. (1980). Attachment and loss. New York: Basic Books.

Boyar, J.I. (1964). The construction and partial validation of a scale for the measurement of fear of death. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Rochester, Rochester, New York.

Brody, E.M. (1985). Parent care as normative family stress. Gerontologist, 25 (1), 19 - 29.

Burr, W.R., Leigh, G.K., Day, R.D., & Constantine, J. (1979). Symbolic interaction and the family. In W. Burr, R. Hill, F.I. Nye, & I.L. Reiss (Eds.) Contemporary theories about the family (Vol. 2), New York: Free Press.

Charmaz, K. (1983). The grounded theory method: An explication and interpretation. In R.M. Emerson (Ed.), Contemporary field research. Boston: Little Brown.

Chenitz, W.C. & Swanson, J.M. (Eds.) (1986). From practice to grounded theory: Qualitative research in nursing. Menlo Park, CA.: Addison-Wesley.

Chown, S.M. & Heron, A. (1965). Psychological aspects of aging in man. Annual Review of Psychology, 16, 417 - 450.

Cicirelli, V.G. (1983). Adult children and their elderly parents. In T. Brubaker, (Ed.) Family relationships in later life. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Cicirelli, V.G. (1981). Helping elderly parents: The role of adult children. Boston: Auburn House.

Clayton, P.J., Halikas, J.A., Maurice, W.L., & Robins, E. (1973). Anticipatory grief and widowhood. British Journal of Psychiatry, 122, 561 - 566.

Colarusso, C.A. & Nemiroff, R.A. (1981). Adult development: A new dimension in psychodynamic theory and practice. New York: Plenum Press.

Corbin, J. (1986). Qualitative data analysis for grounded theory. In W.C. Chenitz & J.M. Swanson (Eds.), From practice to grounded theory: Qualitative research in nursing. Menlo Park, CA.: Addison Wesley.

Datan, N., Greene, A.L., & Reese, H.W. (Eds.) (1986). Life -span developmental psychology: Intergenerational relations. New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Datan, N., Rodeheaver, D., & Hughes, F. (1987). Adult development and aging. Annual Review of Psychology, 38, 153 - 180.

Davidson, G.W. (1975). The waiting room vulture syndrome. In B. Schoenberg et al. (Eds.), Anticipatory grief. New York: Columbia University Press.

Demi, A.S., & Miles, M.S. (1987). Parameters of normal grief: A delphi study. Death Studies, 11 (6), 397-412

Despelder, L.A., & Strickland, A.L. (1983). The last dance: Encountering death and dying. Palo Alto: Mayfield.

Dessonville, C. (1982). Impact of anticipatory grief on subsequent adjustment. Unpublished manuscript. Cited in Siegel, K. & Weinstein, L. (1983). Anticipatory grief reconsidered. Journal of Psychosocial Oncology, 1 (2), 61 - 73.

Dobson, J.E., & Dobson, R.L. (1985). The sandwich generation: dealing with aging parents. Journal of Counselling and Development, 63 (9), 572 - 574.

Donnelly, K.F. (1987). Recovering from the loss of a parent. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.

Edinburg, M.A. (1987). Talking with your aging parents. Boston: Shambhala.

Emerson, R.M. (1983). Contemporary field research: A collection of readings. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Enright, D.J. (Ed.). (1983). The oxford book of death. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Epstein, G., Weitz, L., Roback, H., & McKee, E. (1975). Research on bereavement: A selective and critical review. In L.A. Bugen (Ed.), Death and dying: Theory, research and practice. Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown.

Erikson, E.H. (1959). Identity and the life cycle: Selected papers. New York: International Universities Press.

Erikson, E. (1950). Childhood and society. New York: W.W. Norton.

Feifel, H. (1959). The meaning of death. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Field, P.A. & Morse, J.M. (1985). Nursing research: The application of qualitative approaches. London: Croom Helm.

Frank, S.J., Avery, C.B., & Laman, M.S. (1988). Young adults' perceptions of their relationships with their parents: Individual differences in connectedness, competence, and emotional autonomy. Developmental Psychology, 24 (5), 729 - 737.

Frankl, V.E. (1963). Man's search for meaning: An introduction to logotherapy. New York: Simon and Schuster

Freeman, J. (1985). The early years: Preparation for creative thinking. Gifted Education International, 3 (2), 100 - 104.

Freud, S. (1917). Mourning and melancholia. In Sigmund Freud: Collected papers. (1959) Vol. 4. New York: Basic Books.

Freud, S. (1916 - 17). Introductory lectures on psychoanalysis. Standard Edition, Vols. 15 - 16, 1963. Also in S. Freud's A general introduction to psychoanalysis. New York: Liveright.

Friedman, S.B., Chodoff, P., Mason, J.W., & Hamburg, D.A. (1963), Behavioral observations on parents anticipating the death of a child. Pediatrics, 32, 610 - 625.

Fulton, R., & Fulton, J. (1971). The psychosocial aspect of anticipatory grief. Omega, 2, 91 - 100.

Futterman, E.H., Hoffman, I., & Sabshin, M. (1972). Parental anticipatory mourning. In B. Schoenberg, A.C. Carr, D. Peretz, & A.H. Kutscher (Eds.), Psychological aspects of terminal care. New York: Columbia University Press, pp.243 - 272.

Gamble, T.J., & Zigler, E. (1986). Effects of infant daycare: Another look at the evidence. American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 56 (1), 26 - 42.

Gatch, M.McC. (1976). The biblical tradition. In E.S. Schneidman (Ed.), Death: Current perspectives. Palo Alto: Mayfield Publishing Co.

Gauthier, J., & Marshall, W.L. (1977). Grief: A cognitive-behavioral analysis. Cognitive Therapy and Research, 1, 39 - 44.

Gerber, I., Rusalem, R., Hannon, N., Battin, D., & Arkin, A. (1975). Anticipatory grief and aged widows and widowers. Journal of Gerontology, 30, 225 - 229.

Gesell, A., & Ilg, F.L. (1946). The child from five to ten. New York: Harper & Row.

Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1965). Awareness of dying, Chicago: Aldine.

Glaser, B.G., & Strauss, A.L. (1967). The discovery of grounded theory. Chicago: Aldine.

Glaser, B.G. (1978). Theoretical sensitivity. Mill Valley, CA.: The Sociology Press.

Glick, I.D., Weiss, R.S., & Parkes, C.M. (1974). The first year of bereavement. New York: John Wiley & Sons.

Goldberg, S. (1984). Parent-infant bonding: Another look. Annual Progress in Child Psychiatry & Development, 17 - 57.

Gorer, G. (1965). Death, grief and mourning in contemporary Britain. London: Cresset.

Gould, R.L. (1978). Tranformations: Growth and change in adult life. New York: Simon & Schuster.

Hall, G.J. (1922). Senescence: The last half of life. New York: Appleton - Century - Crofts.

Hanson, S.M., & Bozett, F.W. (1985 - 86). Fatherhood: A library. Marriage and Family Review, 9 (3-4), 229 - 253.

Havighurst, R.J. (1972). Developmental tasks and education, 3rd. ed., New York: McKay.

Hoffman, F.J. (1959). Morality and modern literature. In H. Feifel (Ed.), The meaning of death. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hogan, N.S. (1988). The effects of time on the adolescent sibling bereavement process. Practical Applications in Research, 14 (4), 333 - 335.

Honzik, M.P. (1984). Life-span development. Annual Review of Psychology, 35, 309 - 331.

Horowitz, M.J., Krupnick, J., Kaltreider, N., Wilner, N., Leong, A., & Marmar, C. (1981). Initial psychological response to parental death. Archives of General Psychiatry, 38, 316 - 323.

Hutchinson, S. (1986). Grounded theory: A method. In P.L. Munhill, & C.J. Oiler (Eds.), Nursing research: A qualitative perspective. Norwalk, Conn.: Appleton - Century - Crofts.

Jackson, E.N. (1959). Grief and religion. In H. Feifel (Ed.), The meaning of death. New York: McGraw-Hill.

Jung, C.G. (1960). The stages of life. In The collected works of C.G. Jung, Vol. 8. New York: Julian Press.

Kastenbaum, R., & Aisenberg, R. (1972), The psychology of death. New York: Springer.

Kavanaugh, R.E. (1972). Facing death. Los Angeles: Nash.

Kegan, R. (1982). The evolving self: Problem and process in human development. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Kerckhoff, A.C. (1966). Family patterns and morale in retirement. In I.H. Simpson & J. McKinney (Eds.). Social aspects of aging. Durham: Duke University Press.

Knipscheer, K. (1984). The quality of the relationship between elderly people and their adult children. In V. Garms-Homolova, E.M. Hoerning, & D. Schaeffer (Eds.), Intergenerational relationships. Toronto: C.J. Hogrefe.

Knipscheer, K., & Bevers, A. (1985). Older parents and their middle-aged children: Symmetry or assymetry in their relationship. Canadian Journal on Aging, 4 (3), 145 - 151.

Kowalski, N.C. (1986). Anticipating the death of an elderly parent. In T.A. Rando (Ed.), Loss and anticipatory grief. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books, 187 - 199.

Knox, A.B. (1977). Adult development and learning. San Francisco: Jossey - Bass.

Kubler-Ross, E. (1969). On death and dying. London: Tavistock.

Kutscher, A.H., Carr, A.C., & Kutscher, L.G. (1987). Principles of thanatology. New York: Columbia University Press.

Le Shan, E. (1988). Learning to say good-bye: When a parent dies. New York: Avon.

Levinson, D.J. (1978). The seasons of a man's life. New York: Knopf.

Levinson, D.J. (1986). A conception of adult development. American Psychologist, 1 (1), 3 - 13.

Levinson, D.J. (in press). The seasons of a woman's life. New York: Knopf.

Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). Naturalistic inquiry. Beverly Hills, CA.: Sage.

Lindemann, E. (1944). Symptomatology and management of acute grief. American Journal of Psychiatry, 101, 141 - 148.

Litwak, E. (1965). Extended kin relations in an industrial democratic society. In E. Shanas, & G.F. Streib (Eds.), Social structure and the family: Generational relations. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall.

Lorge, I. (1956). Gerontology (later maturity). Annual Review of Psychology, 7, 349 - 364.

Lowenthal, M.F., Thurnher, M., & Chiriboga, D. (1975). Four stages of life. San Francisco: Jossey - Bass.

Lund, D.A. (1985). Living together: Grandparents and their children tell their problems. Journal of Gerontological Nursing, 11 (11), 29 - 33.

Maddison, D., & Walker, W.L. (1967). Factors affecting the outcome of conjugal bereavement. British Journal of Psychiatry, 113, 1057 - 1067.

Malinak, D.P., Hoyt, M.F., & Patterson, V. (1979). Adult's reactions to the death of a parent: A preliminary study. American Journal of Psychiatry. 136 (9), 1152 - 1156.

Mann, C.H. (1985). Adult development: Individuation, separation and the role of reality. Contemporary Psychoanalysis, 21 (2), 284 - 296.

Marris, P. (1958). Widows and their families. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

McCaffrey, C.M. (1985). The "caring for your aging parent group". Social Work with Groups, 8 (2), 157 - 160.

Mead, G.H. (1934). Mind, self and society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Middleton-Moz, J., & Dwinell, L. (1986). After the tears: Reclaiming the personal losses of childhood. Pompano Beach: Health Communications.

Middleton, W., & Raphael, B. (1987). Bereavement: State of the art and science. The Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 10 (3), 329 - 343.

Miller, J. (1971). Children's reactions to the death of a parent: A review of the psychoanalytic literature. Journal of The American Psychoanalytic Association, 19, 697 - 719.

Mink, I.T., & Nihira (1987). Direction of effects: Family life styles and behavior of TMR children. American Journal of Mental Deficiency, 92 (1), 57 - 64.

Morse, J. (Ed.). (1989). Qualitative nursing research: A contemporary dialogue. Rockville, Maryland: Aspen.

Moss, M.S., Moss, S.Z., & Moles, E.L. (1985). The quality of relationships between elderly parents and their out-of-town children. The Gerontologist, 25 (2), 134 - 140.

Moss, M.S., & Moss S.Z. (1983). The impact of parental death on middle-aged children. Omega, 14 (1), 65 - 75.

Myers, E. (1987). When parents die. New York: Penguin.

Nagy, M.H. (1948). The child's view of death. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 73, 3 - 27.

Nathanson, S., & DeBold, W. (1969). References to life and death, tribute and memory. In A.H. Kutscher (Ed.), Death and bereavement. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.

Natterson, J.M., & Knudson, A.G. Jr. (1960). Observations concerning fear of death in fatally ill children and their mothers. Psysomatic Medicine, 22, 456 - 465.

Needleman, J. (1969). The moment of grief. In A.H. Kutscher (Ed.), Death and bereavement. Springfield: Charles C. Thomas.

Neugarten, B.L. (1975). Adult personality: Toward a psychology of the life cycle. In W.C. Sze (Ed.), The human life cycle. New York: Jason Aronson.

Notman, M.T. (1980). Changing rules for women and mid-life. In W.H. Norman & T.J. Scaramella (Eds.), Midlife: Development and clinical issues. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

Osterweis, M., Solomon, F., & Green, M. (Eds.) (1984). Bereavement: Reactions, consequences, and care. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

Parkes, C.M. (1965). Bereavement & mental illness. British Journal of Medical Psychology, 38, 13 - 26.

Parkes, C.M. (1970). The first year of bereavement. Psychiatry, 33, 444 - 467.

Parkes, C.M. (1972). Bereavement: Studies of grief in adult life. London: Tavistock.

Parkes, C.M. (1975). Determinants of outcome following bereavement. Omega, 6, 303 - 323.

Parsons, T. (1943). The kinship system of the contemporary United States. In T. Parsons (Ed.), Essays in Sociological Theory. Glencoe: Free Press.

Patton, M.Q. (1980). Qualitative evaluation methods. Beverly Hills, CA.: Sage.

Peck, R.C. (1968). Psychological developments in the second half of life. In B.L. Neugarten (Ed.), Middle age and aging. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Pennington, S. (1988). Healing yourself. Toronto: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.

Piaget, J., & Inhelder, B. (1969). The psychology of the child. New York: Basic Books.

Pine, V.R. (1986). An agenda for adaptive anticipation of bereavement. In T.A. Rando (Ed.), Loss and anticipatory grief. Lexington, Mass: Lexington Books, 39 - 54.

Pollock, G.H. (1987). The mourning - liberation process in health and disease. The Psychiatric Clinics of North America, 10 (3), 345 - 354.

Potter-Efron, P.S. (1987). Creative approaches to shame and guilt. Helping the adult child of an alcoholic. Alcoholism Treatment Quarterly, 4 (2), 39 - 56.

Pressey, S.L., & Kuhler, R.G. (1957). Psychological development through the life-span. New York: Harper.

Ragan, P.K. (Ed.) (1979). Aging parents. Los Angeles: University of South California Press.

Ramsay, R.W. (1979). Behavioral approaches to bereavement. In P. Sjoden, S. Bates, & W.S. Dochens (Eds.), Trends in behavior therapy. New York: Academic Press, pp. 217 - 247.

Rando, T.A. (1986). Loss and anticipatory grief. Lexington: Lexington Books.

Raphael, B. (1983). The anatomy of bereavement. New York: Basic Books.

Rennie, D.L., Phillips, J.R., & Quartaro, G.K. (1988). Grounded theory: A promising approach to conceptualization in psychology. Canadian Psychology, 29 (2), 139 - 150.

Roberts, P., & Newton, P.M. (1987). Levinsonian studies of womens' adult development. Psychology & Aging, 2 (2), 154 - 163.

Robinson, B., & Thurnher, M. (1979). Taking care of the aged parents: A family cycle tradition. The Gerontologist, 19, 586 - 593.

Roff, L.L., & Klemmack, D.L. (1986). Norms for employed daughters' and sons' behavior toward frail older parents. Sex Roles, 14, (7-8), 363 - 368.

Rogers, D. (1982). The adult years: An introduction to aging. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall.

Rosenmayr, L., & Kockeis, E. (1965). Umwelt und familie alter menschen. Neuwied and Berlin: Luchterhand.

Rosenmayr, L. (1973). Family relations of the elderly: Recent data and some critical doubts. Zeitschrift fur Gerontologie, 6, (4), 272 - 283.

Rosow, I. (1967). Social integration of the aged. New York: Free Press.

Sanders, W.B., & Pinhey, T.K. (1983). The conduct of social research. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

Sanstrock, J.W. (1986). Life-span development, 2nd Ed. Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown.

Scanlon, J. (1979). Young adulthood. New York: Academy for Educational Development.

Schaie, K.W., & Geiwitz, J. (1982). Adult development and aging. Boston: Little, Brown and Company.

Schaie, K.W., & Gribbing, K. (1975). Adult development and aging. Annual Review of Psychology, 26, 65 - 96.

Scharlach, A.E. (1987). Role strain in mother-daughter relationships in later life. The Gerontologist, 27 (5), 627 - 631.

Schilder, P., & Wechsler, D. (1934). The attitudes of children toward death. Journal of Genetic Psychology, 45, 406 - 451.

Schlentz, M. (1978). A study of grief: The affect of death of parents on middle aged adults. Archives of the Foundation of Thanatology, 7, 157.

Schneidmann, E.S. (1976). Death: Current perspectives. Palo Alto: Mayfield.

Schultz, R. (1979). Death anxiety: Intuitive and empirical perspectives. In L.A. Bugen (Ed.), Death and dying: Theory, research and practice. Dubuque: Wm. C. Brown.

Schwab, J.J., Chalmers, J.M., Conroy, S.J., Farris, P.B., & Markush, R.E. (1975). Studies in grief: A preliminary report. In B. Schoenberg et al. (Eds.), Bereavement: Its psychological aspects. New York: Columbia University Press.

Shakleton, C.H. (1984). The psychology of grief: A review. Advances in Behavior Research and Therapy. 6, 153 - 205.

Shanas, E. et. al. (1968). Old people in three industrial societies. New York: Atherton Press.

Shock, N.W. (1951). Gerontology (later maturity). Annual Review of Psychology, 2, 253 - 270.

Siegel, K., & Weinstein, L. (1983). Anticipatory grief reconsidered. Journal of Psychosocial Oncology, 1, (2), 61 - 73.

Stern, P.N. (1980). Grounded theory methodology: Its uses and processes. Image, 12, (1) 20 - 23.

Strauss, A. (1987). Qualitative analysis for social scientists. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sussman, M.B. (1959). The isolated nuclear family: Fact or fiction. Social Problems, 6, 333 - 340.

Templer, D. (1970). The construction and validation of a death anxiety scale. Journal of General Psychology, 82, 165- 177.

Tournier, P. (1973). The meaning of persons. New York: Harper & Row.

Toynbee, A. (1976). The relation between life and death, living and dying. In E.S. Schneidmann (Ed.), Death: Current perspectives. Palo Alto: Mayfield.

Troll, L.E., & Bengtson, V. (1979). Generations in the family. In W. Burr, et al. (Eds.), Contemporary theories about the family. Vol. 1. New York: Free Press.

Turner, B.A. (1981). Some practical aspects of qualitative data analysis: One way of organizing the cognitive process associated with the generation of grounded theory. Quality and Quantity, 15, 225 - 247.

Vachon, L.S., Rogers, J., Lyall, W.A., Lancee, W.J., Sheldon, A.R., & Freeman, S.J., (1982). Predictors and correlates of high distress in adaptation to conjugal bereavement. American Journal of Psychiatry, 139, 998 - 1002.

Valliant, G.E. (1977). Adaptation to life. Boston: Little, Brown.

White, H.M., Speisman, J.C., & Costos, D. (1983). Young adults and their parents: Individuation to mutuality. New Directions for Child Development, 22, 61 - 76.

Woititz, J. (1983). Adult children of alcoholics. Hollywood, Fl.: Health Communications.

Wolfendale, S. (1985). Parental involvement in childrens' development and education: An overview. Educational & Child Psychology, 2 (1), 3 - 9.

Wood, V., & Robertson, J.F. (1978). Friendship and kinship interaction: Differential effect on the morale of the elderly. Journal of Marriage and the Family, 40, 367 - 375.

Worden, J.W. (1982). Grief counselling and grief therapy: A handbook for the mental health practitioner. New York: Springer.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Rando's Outline of the Multidimensional Nature and Component Processes of Anticipatory Grief

(Derived by M. Fitzgerald from material contained in Rando, 1986)

Dying Patients' anticipatory grief	past present future	Family's anticipatory grief
Psychological Factors	(i)	nature and meaning of the person and relationship to be lost
	(ii)	personal characteristics of griever
	(iii)	characteristics of illness and type of death
Social Factors	(i)	patient's knowledge and response to illness and ultimate death
	(ii)	family and its members response to illness and ultimate death
	(iii)	socioeconomic and environmental variables
Physiological Factors	(i)	griever's physical health
	(ii)	griever's health depletion
	(iii)	rest, sleep and exercise available and engaged in
	(iv)	use of drugs, alcohol, cigarettes, food and caffeine
	(v)	nutrition

INTERRELATED COMPONENT PROCESSES (Family's anticipatory grief)

- I Individual Intrapsychic
  - Awareness and gradual accommodation to the threat
  - Affective processes
  - Cognitive processes
  - Planning for the future
- II Interactional Processes with Dying Patient
  - Directing attention, energy, and behavior toward dying patient
  - Resolution of personal relationship toward dying patient
  - Helping dying patient
- III Familial and Social Processes

APPENDIX B

Components of Grief

Theorists	Stages and Phases of Grief
Kubler-Ross	Denial and Isolation Anger Bargaining Depression Acceptance
Bowlby	Numbing Yearning and Searching Disorganization Reorganization
Gorer	Shock Withdrawal Re-establishing (physical and mental balance)
Kavanaugh	Shock Disorganization Volatile Emotions Guilt Loss and Loneliness Relief Re-establishment
Parkes	Numbness Pining and Search Depression Recovery

APPENDIX C

University of Alberta
Faculty of Education

Informed Consent Form

SUBJECT TITLE: Adults' Anticipatory Loss of Their Parents
INVESTIGATOR: Michael Fitzgerald Phone: 432-5205
433-9286

The purpose of this research is to increase understanding of adults anticipating the loss of their parents. Interviews will be conducted at least twice and each interview will last approximately one hour. During these interviews, you will be asked questions about personal attitudes, feelings, and experiences. Interviews will be audio-taped.

There may be no direct benefits to the participants of this study, but it is hoped that the information they share will be helpful to other adults and helping professionals.

THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT I, ______________________, HEREBY agree to participate as a volunteer in the above named research study.

I understand that where no health risks are anticipated, should upset or discomfort result from participation in the study, referral to an appropriate service will be offered.

I hereby give my permission to be interviewed and for the interviews to be tape-recorded and subsequently transcribed into written form using a pseudonym.

I understand that any tapes or transcripts will be used solely for research or educational purposes, respecting confidentiality and anonymity at all times.

I understand that I am free to withdraw my consent and terminate my participation at any time, without penalty.

I have been given the opportunity to ask whatever questions I desire, and all questions have been answered to my satisfaction.

Participant	Researcher	Date